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ANIMERICA

Vol. 4, No. 8

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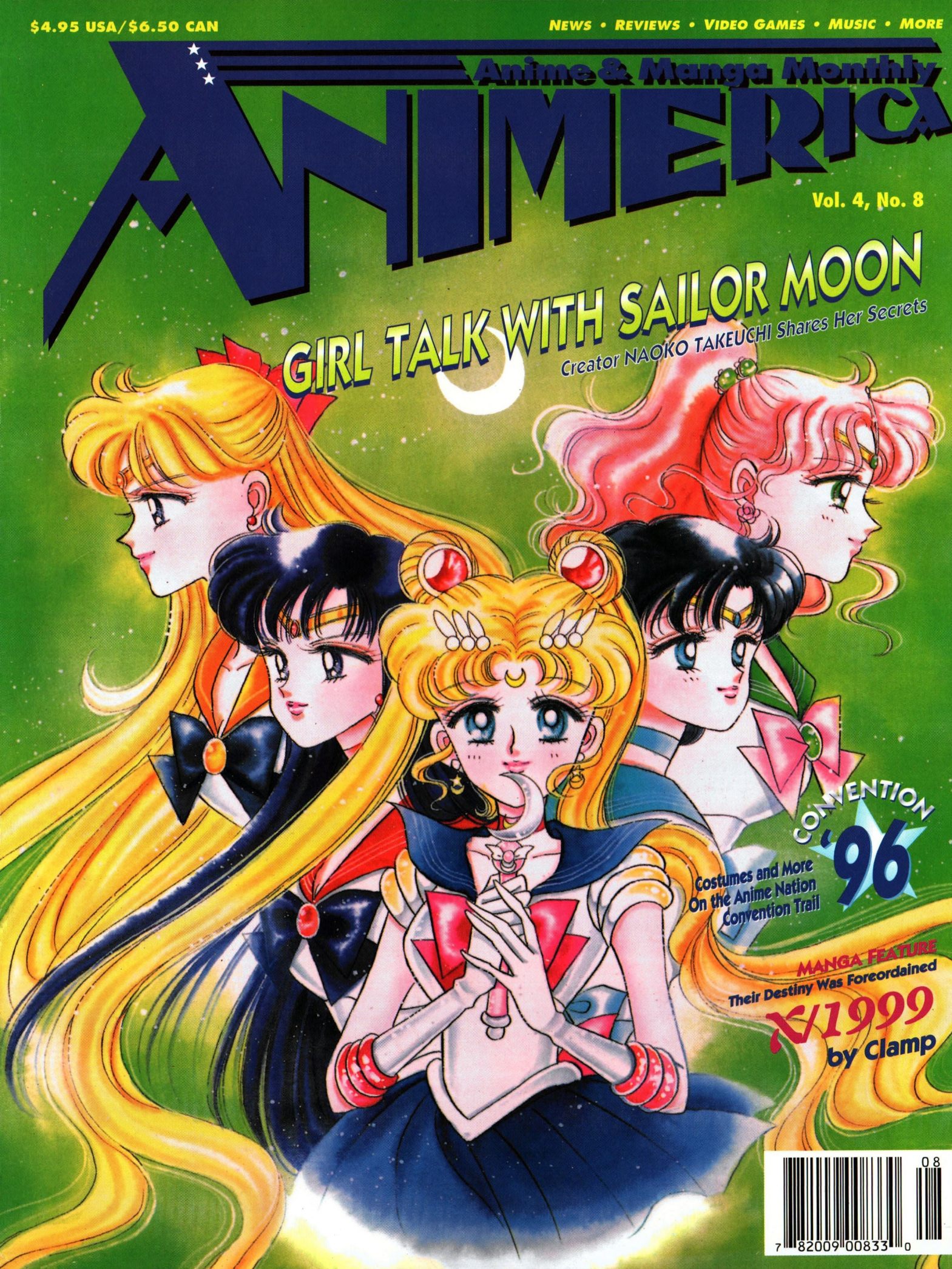
Creator NAOKO TAKEUCHI Shares Her Secrets



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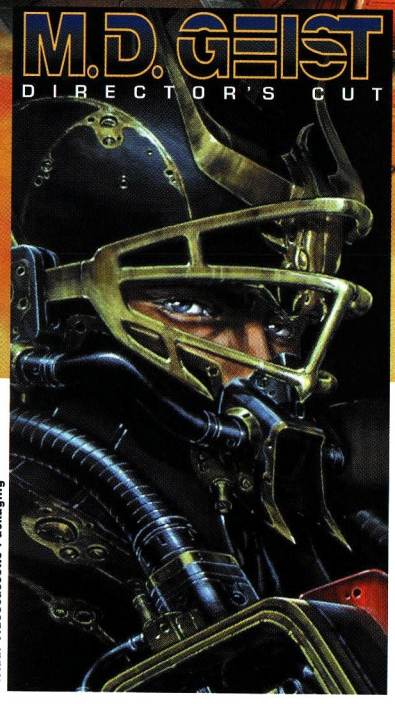

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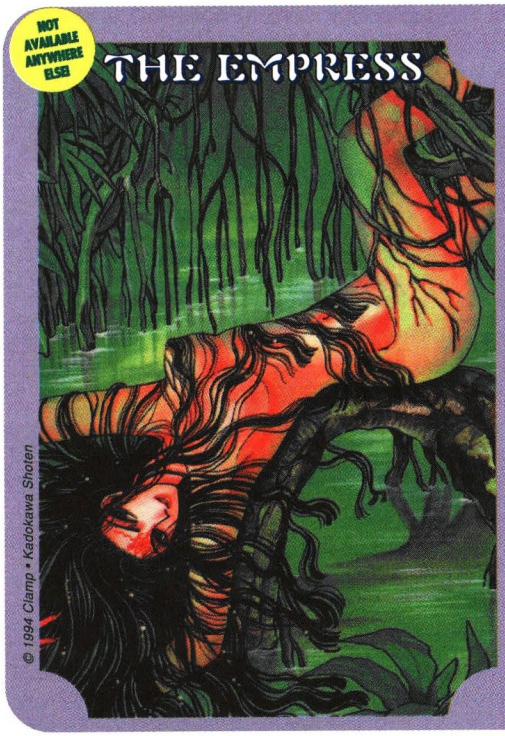

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THAT NO. 42* AGAIN.

© Hayao Miyazaki • Nibariki • Tokuma Shoten

If you don't count our Vol. 1, No. 0 (Premiere) issue back in November '92, this makes forty-two issues of ANIMERICA we've been privileged to publish over these past four years. After you've published forty-two issues of something, you kinda start to build up a rhythm, and one of the things your editors have learned by now is that the "From the Editor" section is a great place to put otherwise hard-to-fit items such as details on impromptu ANIMERICA-sponsored contests or late-breaking news.

As this issue goes to the printers (*just* as it's getting ready to go, in fact, as this is the very last part of the issue to be written), what may very well be the biggest story of the anime year has just broken. Disney, we've just learned, has announced that they have acquired the rights to distribute eight of Miyazaki's animated films.

If you're one of the people who regularly peruses the Miyazaki Mailing List on the Internet (nausicaa@brownvm.brown.edu), you were probably among the first to hear of the story. Here at the ANIMERICA office, we'd heard convincing rumors about a week or so prior to Disney and Tokuma Shoten's official joint announcement (until now, Tokuma has been the distributor for most of Miyazaki's films), but weren't sure what to believe, and decided to withhold judgment until the story was confirmed.

That confirmation came on 23 July, when Walt Disney Studios chairman Joe Roth and Tokuma Shoten president and chief executive Yasuyoshi Tokuma jointly announced a deal which would allow Disney to internationally distribute eight of Miyazaki's films, as well as several other of Tokuma's live-action films (surprisingly, the deal includes distribution within Miyazaki's native Japan, an aspect of the deal described as "unusual" by Andrew Pollack in his NEW YORK TIMES article). According to sources, the first film to be distributed by Disney will be "Shall We Dance," one of Japan's top box office hits of this year, described as a romantic comedy set in Tokyo about a middle-aged businessman learning social dancing.

"Miyazaki's films feature the same kind of quality family entertainment that Disney strives to produce," Roth said via satellite to a Tokyo news conference.

"We believe we can increase the marketability of our videos by letting Disney do the whole distribution because of Disney's strong sales network," said Tokuma.

"AAAGHHH—!," said anime fans around the globe, typing furiously to each other 'round the clock in Internet forums such as the Miyazaki Mailing List, filling column after column of text in 10-pt. ASCII Courier. What will this mean for Disney? they asked. What will this mean for Miyazaki!? How involved will Disney be in the production of new Miyazaki films, such as the upcoming "Monster Princess" ["*Mononoke Hime*," *covered in our Vol. 2, No. 2 issue—Ed.*], expected to premiere in Japanese theaters in 1997?

What does it MEAN!?

By the time you read this, no doubt many of you will already have heard the details—or shall we say, more details than *we've* heard at this point, seeing as this issue is going to bed just as the story is breaking. Just in case you *haven't* heard about it until now, we want to make sure that you *have*, and want to encourage everyone who loves Miyazaki anime in particular or anime in general to write in with your opinions. We'd like to make ANIMERICA a forum for thoughtful, reasoned discussion, a place to examine and reflect upon what's got to be the biggest story not only in *this* anime year, but *any* anime year.

If the brouhaha over the ***LION KING*** controversy hasn't done it already, now more than ever the eyes of the mainstream entertainment world will be watching, examining, calculating what other properties might be similarly guided to a wider, more truly global stage. Maybe now, children of all ages will be able to see films such as ***NAUSICAÄ***, ***PORCO ROSSO***, ***KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE***, and more on the silver screen, they way they were meant to be seen, *without* having to go to Japan. Maybe now, we'll be able to buy our favorite Miyazaki films on domestic VHS and LD, *without* having to pay upwards of US$100.00 for the privilege. Maybe now, anime shows on-air in the U.S. such as ***SAILOR MOON*** may finally get the wider audiences they deserve, *without* well-meaning yet ultimately ill-advised letter-writing campaigns to increasingly annoyed Japanese companies who have nothing to do with the U.S. broadcast of the series (we ourselves bear some responsibility for this one).

Maybe now, if this news over Disney's impending distribution of Miyazaki films causes you to exclaim that the end of the world is nigh, you'll realize that the import versions of Miyazaki's films are still available, and that you're just as free to buy them in an LD Box Set as you ever were...*without* being forced to watch the Disney-distributed version, should you choose not to. That's your choice, and that's your right.

Count us in on the side of choices.

trish

Trish Ledoux
Editor

** Douglas Adams tells us No. 42 is the secret of the universe. Leiji Matsumoto tells us 42 is the number of souls on Harlock's ship, the Arcadia. Now, 42 is the number of the ANIMERICA issue in which the Disney/Miyazaki news broke. Coincidence? You be the judge.*

Contributors

Amateur voice-actor and renowned "con medic," **Pablo "Doc" Fraga** has just recently finished a tour of the U.S. Navy, and now resides in his beloved city of Dallas, Texas. He hopes to someday have a career in voice-acting, and is known for putting on one bizarre show at the masquerade. For a spirited report of Project A-Kon 7, and a look at Doc's totally awesome "Kodachi" tattoo, turn to page 9.

Crystal and Amy, a.k.a. "The Top Ten List Girls," are on a mission to bring laughter to audiences and brighten lives through comedy in Dallas, and across the world. In the meantime, Crystal continues her education at Xavier University in Cincinnati, and Amy, while working as an assistant manager at Lone Star Comics, pursues an education in the proud local community college district and hopefully some sort of four-year university that has the courage to take her.

Some of the attendees at this year's Project A-Kon or KatsuCon have already seen **Brad Diederichs**, one-half of our ANIMERICA mascot team, well-known ***DRAGON BALL*** fan and purple-haired "Trunks" doppelgänger, as well as a nationally famous ***SAILOR MOON*** follower. This month, Brad checks in with a report on the hijinks to be had at Virginia's KatsuCon 2. For a good look at Brad in a skirt (as Sailor Venus), turn to page 8.

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Anime & Manga Monthly

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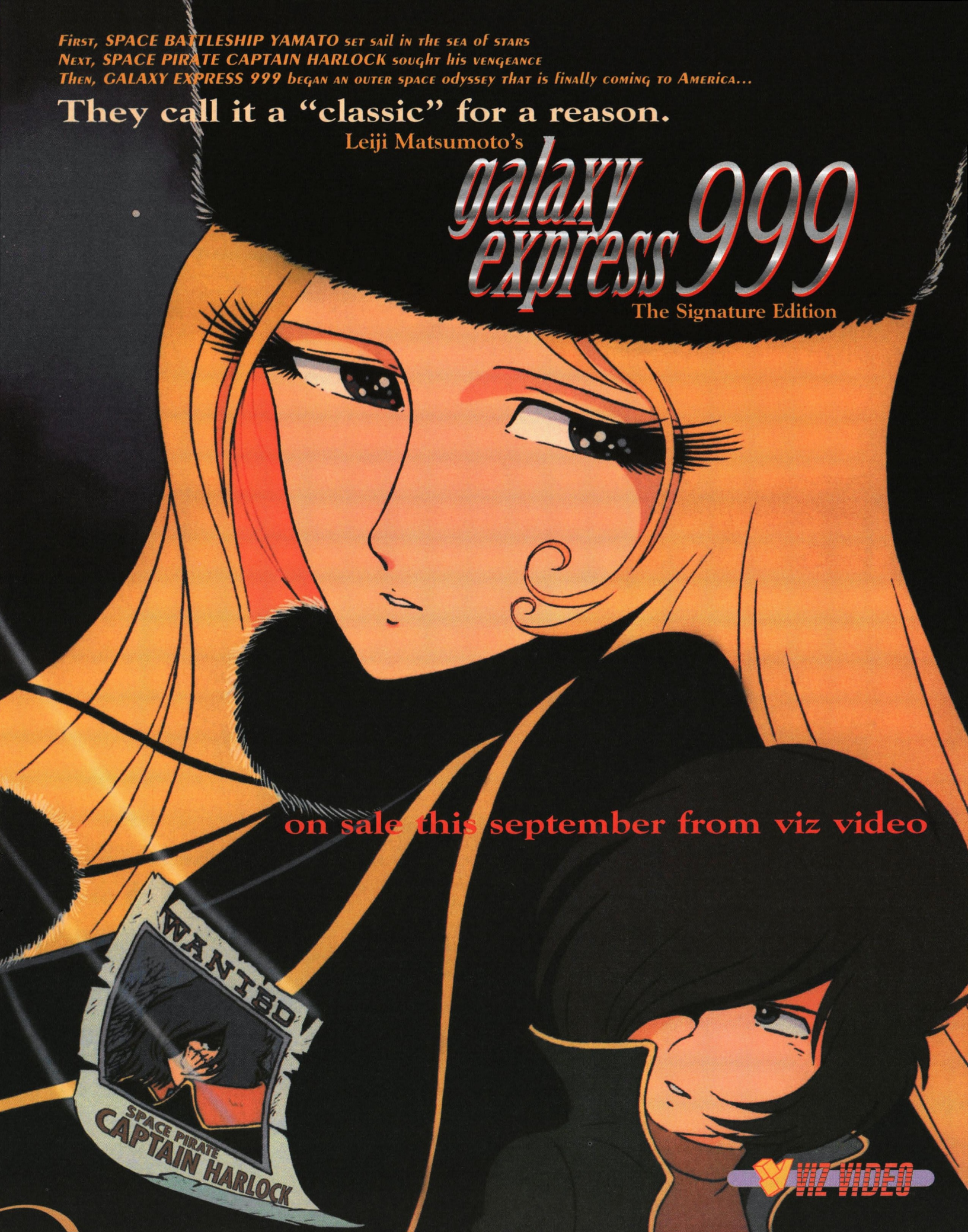
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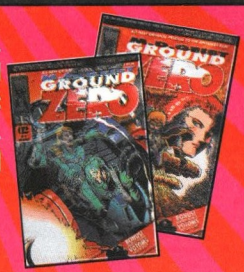

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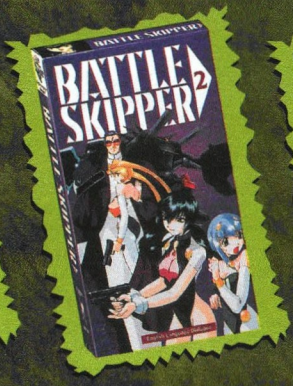

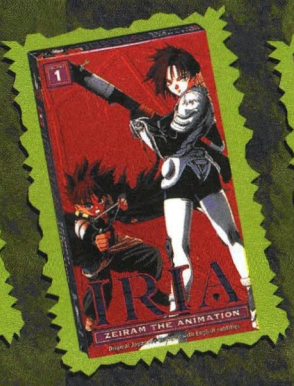

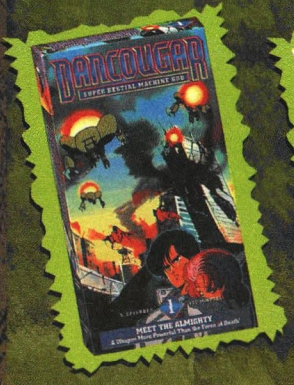

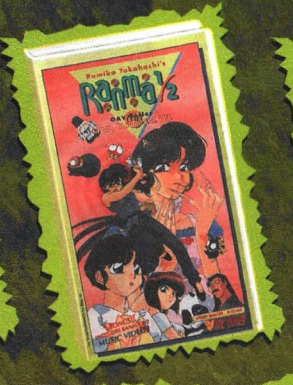

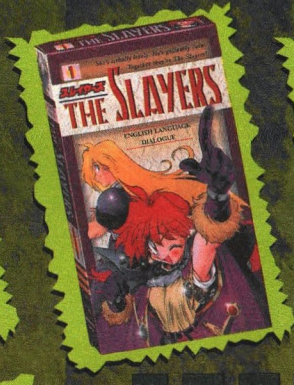

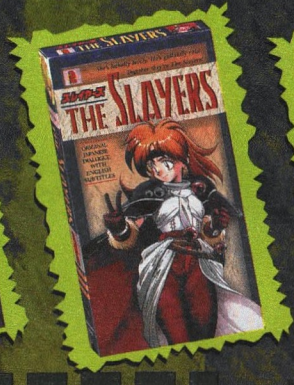

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*The animated girl-superhero series **SAILOR MOON** has made sailor sweethearts out of the most curmudgeonly of fans all over the world. Now grab your magic wands and listen close as **SAILOR MOON**'s creator **Naoko Takeuchi** shares a few secrets regarding her views on feminism, on how she kills off her male characters "too easily," and how Tuxedo Mask is influenced by VOTOMS' Chirico and Leiji Matsumoto's Captain Harlock.*

SAILOR MOON
Name: Serena / Usagi Tsukino
Birthday: 30 June
Star Sign: Cancer
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/skills: See chart on page 20.

> **"In the beginning they kept on telling me it was a weird manga. I think it stood out in the magazine."**

Naoko Takeuchi is talking about her own creation, ***SAILOR MOON***, a manga serial originally intended for young girls that has somehow become one of the most popular animated shows to hit Japan in years. "NAKAYOSHI, where ***SAILOR MOON*** is serialized, is a regular *shôjo* manga magazine," Takeuchi says, "so I think I've been drawing regular *shôjo* manga. But all my manga artist friends say, 'Your manga is weird!'" She laughs. "I'd call it an anything-goes *shôjo* manga."

Shôjo manga, or "girls' comics," is less well known in the States than its boys-oriented counterpart, the typically action-packed robots, guns and mega-martial arts of *shônen* manga ("boys' comics").

Takeuchi explains the difference between the two genres. "*Shôjo* manga is a style of manga drawn for dreaming Japanese girls. It's more oriented toward love stories and psychological depictions." With that in mind, how did ***SAILOR MOON***, a story which in some ways, resembles American superhero stories more than anything else, come about?

"I'd always wanted to do a story where the heroes of justice prevail, and I could wrap up the story in self-contained episodes. You can establish a formula that way, so I thought it'd be easier (for readers) to get into the story. I thought it might even be better if the heroes were cute girls. I think that just *might* be the series' appeal."

superheroes in sailor suits

SAILOR MOON began as what was intended to be a single-shot feature for NAKAYOSHI's special edition, RUNRUN magazine. "I was told I could draw any kind of story I wanted. So I told my editor, 'I've always wanted to do a hero of justice story.' He told me in return, 'I'd like a *heroine* of justice in *sailor suit*, then,'" laughs Takeuchi. Her editor's suggestion formed the basis for the story that would become ***CODENAME IS SAILOR V***. Then, ***SAILOR V*** was selected for animation, and a new legend was born.

"Toei Animation said they wanted to animate ***SAILOR V***, so I started the serial. We decided that if a new monthly serial were to get started, it might as well be a broader story than ***SAILOR V***, so ***SAILOR MOON*** got started in NAKAYOSHI magazine." ***SAILOR MOON*** showcased Takeuchi's love for superhero stories and fighting-team shows such as ***SPACE DETECTIVE GAVAN***. "I

like (hero stories) very much, but I never thought that I'd be able to draw a story of the genre. I've been drawing stories that excited girls, and now, I'm drawing action and poses. I'm not used to them, so it's a little tough."

But what defines a "hero" to Naoko Takeuchi? "When I debuted," Takeuchi remembers, "I wanted to do a realistic school-type manga, but...it's manga. We have to provide dreams and entertainment and fantasies to our readers. I started drawing manga relatively late. I was a regular college student and got a regular job and then started drawing. So I have quite a few normal students and OL friends. [*"OL" stands for "office lady," and is the typical term for working women in Japan, usually meaning a secretary or other office worker—Ed.*] These days, women really have the upper hand in Japanese society, don't they? My friends and I would have chats about relationships or work and we'd always conclude that we shouldn't depend on men. I think that women are actually stronger, and I wanted to draw that in ***SAILOR MOON***. Maybe that's why my male characters die off so easily," she laughs.

"When a girl breaks off a relationship, the girls get together and cheer her up, don't they? They tell her not to depend on men, or that it's no use getting depressed over a guy, and to be stronger, or that a girl's best friend is another girl...I think that these feelings show up in ***SAILOR MOON***, and I think that's what makes the heroines stronger.

"Actually," she continues, "I want to be protected by a boy just like a normal girl. But there's no one good out there, and I can't find happiness. So I started thinking that you can't depend on men, and I got a little reckless. As a result, I may have made Sailor Moon like a strong hero type.

"I guess it *is* a weird manga."

men with shadows

The "strong hero" theme of ***SAILOR MOON*** is also reflected in its story, which, especially for "girls'" manga, often tends toward a deadly seriousness, and a strong sense of duty and sacrifice—none of which is too surprising, once you know Naoko Takeuchi's influences.

"I was a fan of ***SPACE CRUISER YAMATO*** in junior high. I also loved Leiji Matsumoto's ***BATTLEFIELD*** series and watched ***CAPTAIN HARLOCK*** many, many times. Leiji Matsumoto's women are all adult and sexy. A manga artist friend pointed it out to me, and I think the girls I draw very much show Leiji Matsumoto's influence. Actually, I wish I could draw Usagi a little more chubby and cute, but I have a hard time deviating from my taste. Also, ***VOTOMS***' main character Chirico was my ideal type. I like dark characters with shadows."

The "character with a shadow" in ***SAILOR MOON*** is obviously the Sailors' dark companion, the mysteriously masked, rose-throwing enigma, Tuxedo Mask. "The sailor suit is my editor's taste, but the tuxedo is mine," she smiles. "I like tuxedos, so I wanted to use a hero in a tuxedo. I fully planned on keeping him a serious character in the manga, no gags." When asked on whom she based the character, she responds, "Many people ask me, but he has no specific model. I always liked Captain Harlock and Chirico from ***VOTOMS***.... Characters with a shadow. Perhaps a collage of such characters is Tuxedo Mask." But Tuxedo Mask didn't turn out *precisely* as grim as his spiritual forebears. "I wanted to draw my Tuxedo Mask as sort of an ideal, but he became too talkative," she sighs. In fact, Takeuchi was a little dismayed by the animation's tendency to allow her dark hero to stoop to comedy on occasion. "I was a little shocked by that," she laughs. "I really like Tuxedo Mask, and he's not supposed to be like that. I wonder if the animation's staff will get angry at me if I say that...."

sound, vision...and men who die too easily

Despite the popularity that the animated ***SAILOR MOON*** was quickly to gain, for Takeuchi, the idea of seeing her work animated was a little hard to get used to at first. "I haven't really grasped it," she was quoted as saying in an interview published back when the show was still new to television. "I think, 'My drawings are going to move...I'm so happy!' but that's about it. In a little while, I may feel differently, but for now, it's wonderful to see the drawings move with voices too."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)

SAILOR VENUS
Mina / Minako Aino
Birthday: 22 October
Star Sign: Libra
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/skills: As the legendary "Sailor V," Mina/Minako was the original "Sailor Scout." In the manga, when she first appeared, she was posing as the Moon Princess in order to protect the true Princess until her memories could awaken. When Usagi finally regained her Moon Princess identity, Mina assumed the new role of Sailor Venus. She also dreams of becoming an idol singer.

Photo by Brad Diederichs

CONVENTION '96

Anime Nation Grand Tour • Dateline 1996

Even if you couldn't be there in person, you can feel like you were there in full otaku spirit, with our all-over-the-place report of the summer conventions (plus a couple of springtime ones), with debriefings on the guests, the panels, the costumes, the events and more! See if you can recognize some familiar faces!

Photo by Kim Aquino

KATSUCON 2 • 8 MARCH-10 MARCH 1996 • VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

"ROUND TWO FOR KATSUCON"

By Brad "Trunks" Diederichs

Friday

At opening ceremonies on Friday evening, the attendees were introduced to the various guests: **Masakazu Katsura** (***VIDEO GIRL AI***, ***WINGMAN***, ***D.N.A.^{2}***), **Toren Smith** (Studio Proteus), **Ben Dunn** (***NINJA HIGH SCHOOL***), **Fred Perry** (***GOLDIGGER***), **Robert DeJesus** (***PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS***), **Steve Bennett** and **Scott Frazier**. Special fan guests of honor were **Richard "Pocky Man" Kim** and **Steve "Starbuck" Pearl** (who seemed to have brought their own cheering sections). After ceremonies, there was just enough time to eat before the lavish karaoke contest. Many would-be idol singers gave it their best, from ***DRAGON BALL*** songs to one guy's inspirational "Lynn Minmei" tribute, but the spotlight was stolen by **Autumn Kaylor**'s performance of the ***SAILOR MOON*** theme.

Photo by Jeff Okamoto

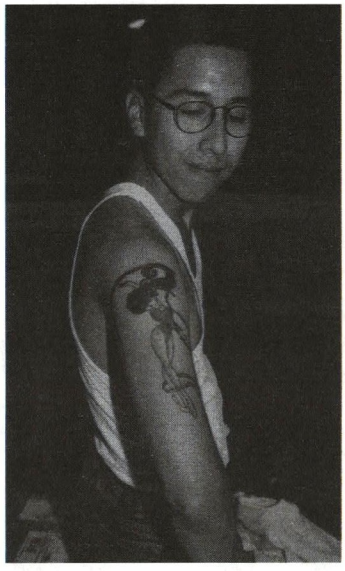
Photo by Valerie Shrum

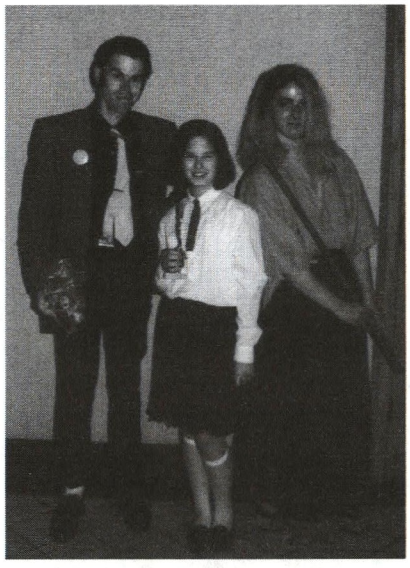
Photo by Jeff Okamoto

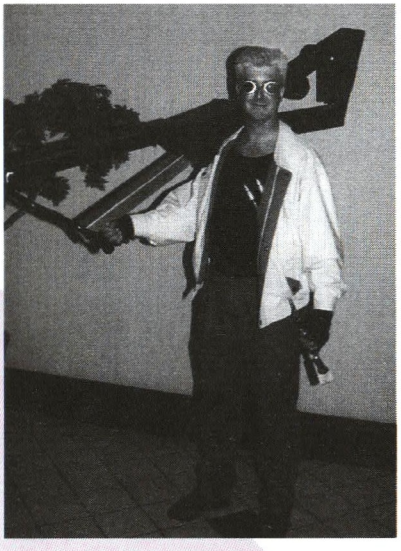
Photo by Jack Thielepape

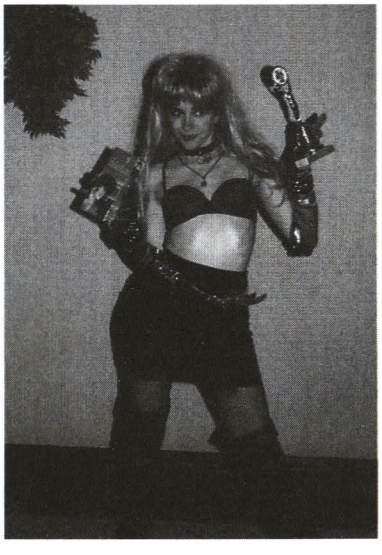
Unless otherwise noted, all photos are by Julie Davis and the ANIMERICA staff.

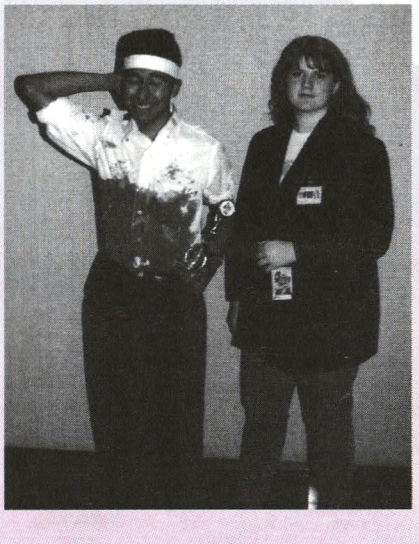
Photo by Jack Thielepape

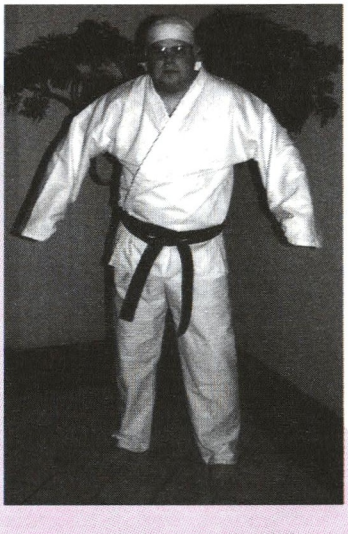












Saturday
Much to do, from the video rooms to guest autograph sessions, to (of course) checking the dealers' room. All of the dealers were pleasantly surprised by the helpfulness and efficiency of the con staff. **Steve Bennett**'s cel painting class was wall-to-wall with students, and **Scott Frazier** gave out ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** and ***BAKURETSU HUNTER*** cels to everyone who attended. AnimEigo held voice-acting tryouts for their new ***OH MY GODDESS!*** English-dub, and attendees got the chance to audition by finding tickets in their registration packets. AnimEigo also brought with them the lovely voice-actors from the English version of ***YOU'RE UNDER ARREST***, **Joanne Luzzato** ("Miyuki") and **Tamara Burnham** ("Natsumi"). These two were seen giving out citations to many of the attendees and dealers for having "too much fun."

Saturday Night
After the Cosplay, many of the costumers went to the local Denny's to get dinner (you'd think those people had never seen men in sailor suits before!). Then came the con dance, the "Silicon Menagerie," where otaku could dance the night away to a wide variety of music, both Japanese and otherwise. Following the dance, there were many room parties to choose from, such as "Shaolin Showdown" or "Z Room Party"—and who could forget the "Hyper-Fighting Challenge," a video game tournament that had over seven different contests and over one hundred contestants!

Sunday
Those left standing were treated to dealers' room final-day sale prices and more panels. Viz premiered the new ***RANMA 1/2 HARD BATTLE*** volume, (***"DHARMA CHAMELEON"***) to great success. At the closing ceremonies, everyone saw the winner of the music video contest—***PROJECT A-KO*** to the tune of Offspring's "Come Out and Play." A good time was had by all!

PROJECT A-KON 7 • 31 MAY-2 JUNE 1996 • DALLAS, TEXAS

"IT CAME UPON BIG D LIKE A WILD TEXAS STORM...."

By Pablo "Doc" Fraga, Amy "Scully" Smart and Crystal "Top Ten" Meadows

Friday
"Welcome to Texas"
The guests were greeted by a beautiful blue and hot day. After stepping off the plane, one Japanese guest remarked, "It's hot!" **Brad Diederichs** said it best about the heat: "I think Hell took lessons in being hot from this place." A boisterous countdown welcomed the opening of the dealers' rooms at noon, where dealers from California to Virginia were present to offer a wide array of deals and treasures to anxious fans, who just could not get enough. "Sales were phenomenal," said **Mickey** (Oh, Mickey, you're so fine/you're so fine you blow my mind/hey Mickey!) **Flynn**, who was found later with his head removed [*Don't ask me—Ed.*], still running around in a T-shirt and a tux coat. Two video rooms were opened showing nonstop anime. Cyber-freaks could log on in the Internet room with extraordinary access all over the world courtesy of CyberRamp. Later that night, the opening ceremonies officially welcomed us to the con. It was the premiere of the animation "Project Annie-May" and "The Item" by amateur animation studio extraordinaire **White Radish**. The house was literally rocked by a band of Taiko drummers called Kobushi and an interesting ballet group. A-Kon was also the host of several

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 26)

SPECIAL PREVIEW

ANIMERICA SUMMER FUN SPECIAL FEATURE!

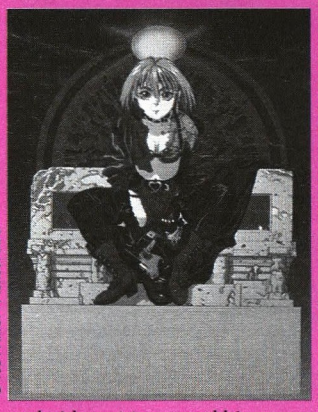
Our regularly scheduled news will be back next month! In the meantime, get ready for the...

FALL ANIME PREVIEW

This year, we've seen more theatrical anime and more continuing anime TV series released here in the U.S. than ever before! Check our handy hit list and make your picks for ultimate back-to-school boffo viewing! (For extra fun, see our suggested rental nite expand-your-mind double features!)

ARMITAGE III: POLY-MATRIX

MOVIE • ON SALE THIS FALL • PIONEER LDCA • ENGLISH VHS



© 1994 A.I.C. • Pioneer LDC

THE SETUP: High-end theatrical version of dramatic cyborgs-on-Mars OAV series. Hard-bitten Earth-born cop goes to Mars and finds tension on the red planet turning to murder as a mad terrorist begins to systematically kill off the most advanced androids on Mars—and his new partner turns out to be a potential target....

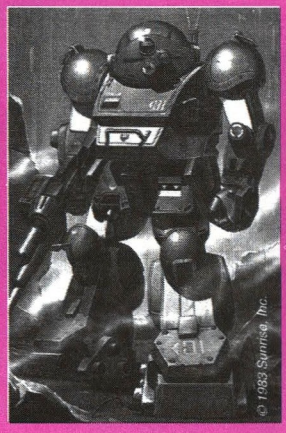
THE BUZZ: Non-bubbly heroine wears a bikini bra and hot pants, but takes no crap from anyone. Nekkid babe moments all non-erotic. ***BLADE RUNNER***-esque story is grimmer than audiences might expect. New Hollywood sound and Hollywood actors Kiefer Sutherland and Elizabeth Berkley in the main voice-roles (English only!) points to a future of more world-focused anime releases.

Makes a good pair with: ***ARMITAGE***'s theme is very much at odds with the summer's biggest movie release, the animated ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***, making for an interesting date-night double feature.

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

TV SERIES • ON SALE SEPTEMBER • U.S. MANGA CORPS • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: Super-soldier goes to war in a story that's part ***UNIVERSAL SOLDIER***, part ***SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*** (with robots). Realistic-looking nuts-'n'-bolts "VOTOMS" robots (**V**ertical **O**ne-man **T**ank for **O**ffense and **M**aneuvers is the most typical acronym cited, though **V**ery **O**bnoxious **T**aggers **O**ut-of-sight **M**urder **S**ervices is cited on more than one official model kit box) designed by ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM***'s original mecha designer, Kunio Okawara.



© 1983 Sunrise, Inc.

THE BUZZ: War is hell. ***VOTOMS*** is an all-time classic robot TV series, often cited as equal to ***GUNDAM*** for its grim and gritty storyline...but it's been years since ***ROBOTECH*** got big-time play on U.S. screens (not counting reruns on the Sci-Fi Channel). Will mecha shows of The Big '80s gain the same fan support among new otaku weaned on ***TENCHI*** and ***RANMA***?

Makes a good pair with: Anything with war, dammit! Okay, if you haven't seen ***CRASH AND BURN*** (live-action) by now, this is the time.

BATTLE ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL

OAV • ON SALE NOW • ANIMEIGO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/"HYBRID" LD

THE SETUP: '80s OAV with sword-swinging, hick-kickin' superheroes! A mask-wearing, kung fu-fightin' muscle-bound high school guy is possessed by an other-dimensional master of evil, and when a gate opens between the two worlds, his classmates start mutating into monsters. Fight!

© 1987 Tokyo Japan Communications

THE BUZZ: ***KICKBOXER*** meets ***DEMON CITY SHINJUKU***. Mutated monsters poppin' out of the woodwork. Kung fu fightin'. 'Nuff said.

Makes a good pair with: ***BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER***.

BLUE SEED

TV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • A.D. VISION • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

THE SETUP: A young girl named Momiji (granted special powers by plant monsters in an accident), and her powered-up protector, Mamoru (granted special powers by plant monsters on purpose), become part of a ghostbusting team of monster slayers to defeat aforementioned plant creatures that threaten Japan. Created by Yuzo Takada (***3x3 EYES***) with character designs by Takayuki Goto (***PLEASE SAVE MY EARTH***). "Momiji" is voiced by the ubiquitous Megumi Hayashibara (who also sings the theme song).

© 1995 Yuzo Takada • Takeshobo • Blue Seed Project • TV Tokyo • NAS

THE BUZZ: ***GUYVER***-like transformations, ***X-FILES***-like mystical mysteries, rampaging plant monsters, impressive displays of magical power. Mamoru is a tortured hunk, and Momiji often appears semi-nekkid. Great music and well-above-average TV animation quality.

Makes a good pair with: ***3x3 EYES*** or ***GHOSTBUSTERS*** (live-action). Who you gonna call?

BURN UP W!
OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • A.D. VISION • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

© 1995 A.I.C. • MRC • A.D. Vision

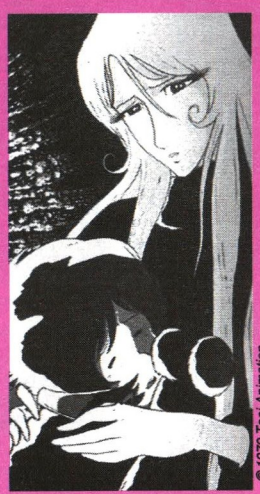
THE SETUP: ***DIE HARD*** meets ***BUBBLEGUM CRISIS*** as curvaceous Team Warrior fights the bad guys in sequel to futuristic police-babe drama ***BURN UP!***, given a totally revamped look by animators who worked on fan favorite chicks-from-outer-space comedy ***TENCHI MUYÔ!***. One of the new trend of anime releases where the actual production was partially funded by its U.S. release company.

THE BUZZ: Nekkid and semi-nekkid babe moments aplenty in the currently fashionable style. Hyperkinetic babes 'n' bullets action.

Makes a good pair with: You can still catch ***CHARLIE'S ANGELS*** on late-night TV.

GALAXY EXPRESS 999: THE SIGNATURE EDITION
MOVIE • ON SALE SEPTEMBER • VIZ VIDEO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: A young boy, seeking revenge for his mother's death, makes a bargain with a mysterious woman in order to get passage on the galactic train *Galaxy Express 999*. His journey brings him face to face with the galaxy's most legendary figures—Captain Harlock, Emeraldas and more—and forces him to confront his ideas about life. Created by Leiji ***"STAR BLAZERS"*** Matsumoto, and directed by Rin Taro (***DAGGER OF KAMUI***).



© 1979 Toei Animation

THE BUZZ: Uncut release of anime classic, previously available in America only in a severely edited version. 1979 movie-quality animation still holds up marvelously, though Matsumoto's ***SANDS OF IWO JIMA***-esque attitude may take some getting used to for today's fans.

Makes a good pair with: Despite copious frying lasers, humanist theme of ***GE 999*** is almost the exact opposite of the technology-embracing ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***, making for another interesting home video date-night double-feature.

GHOST IN THE SHELL
MOVIE • ON SALE NOW • MANGA ENTERTAINMENT • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS

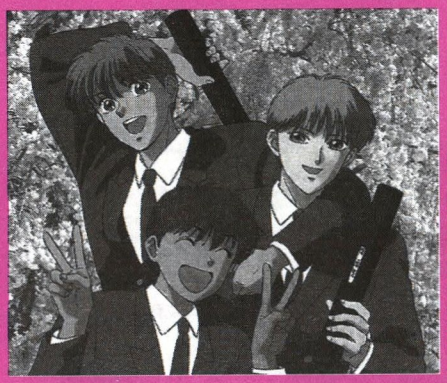
THE SETUP: Major Motoko Kusunagi is a cyborg police officer in a future where criminals and terrorists often slip in and out of robot bodies to commit cyber-hacking crimes (the human mind being the "ghost" of the title). The latest

© Masamune Shirow • Kodansha • Bandai Visual • Manga Entertainment

threat facing the Major's squad is a new artificial lifeform whose total existence is that of a cyber-"ghost," jumping from body to body. Based on the manga by Masamune Shirow (***APPLESEED***, ***DOMINION***).

THE BUZZ: Cyberpunk classic in the making. Fab animation, ***AKIRA***-like cityscapes and high-end computer graphics make for impressive eye candy. Violence and nekkid babes throughout fit the target "18-24 male demographic" like spandex tights, but most cyberpunk fans have already read ***NEUROMANCER*** by now. ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** may be better remembered for impressive visuals than impressive story.

Makes a good pair with: ***AKIRA*** a good match in animation quality, but the two stories are very different in tone (unapologetic nihilism vs. inevitable co-option?). Try ***BLACK MAGIC M-66*** for more of Shirow's guns-'a-blazin' action with less sociological theory, or ***STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION***, ***"THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS."*** You will be assimilated!



© 1991 Yukie Nasu • Hakusensha • Victor Entertainment • Pierrot Project

HERE IS GREENWOOD
OAV SERIES • ON SALE OCTOBER • SOFTWARE SCULPTORS • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

THE SETUP: A teenage boy moves out of the house when his older brother moves back in (after marrying his younger brother's old girlfriend!), and into a new school dorm where he finds a ***90210***-like soap of high school life and love.

THE BUZZ: Unconventional love triangles featuring beautiful, *shôjo*-esque boys and girls skirt the borders of taboo, which should draw the attention of those looking for more offbeat anime and/or intense character stories. Needs to catch on among the right crowd.

Makes a good pair with: ***PLEASE SAVE MY EARTH*** or MTV's ***MY SO-CALLED LIFE*** for more strangeness in a supposedly "normal" setting.

HYPER DOLLS
OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • PIONEER LDCA • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

THE SETUP: Alien androids travel to Earth to be superheroes in our hour of greatest need, fighting monsters and singing songs while dressed in scanty spandex.

THE BUZZ: '70s superhero style, skimpy costumes, and a character dynamic straight out of Pink Lady. Suggested viewing for really big Shonen Knife fans.

Makes a good pair with: An overcaffeinated marathon of ***MOTHRA***, ***ULTRAMAN*** and ***ASTRO BOY*** while listening to Pizzicato Five CDs. Drink lots of canned coffee and munch Pocky 'till you want to dance the jitterbug!

© 1995 A.I.C. • Pioneer LDC

MAISON IKKOKU

TV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • VIZ VIDEO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS

© Rumiko Takahashi • Shogakukan • Kitty • Fuji TV

THE SETUP: Non-supernatural anime saga of college boy meets beautiful young apartment manager and his attempts to get closer to her despite the assortment of meddling weirdos also inhabiting their boarding house. By queen of the romance comedy, Rumiko Takahashi (***RANMA 1/2***, ***URUSEI YATSURA***, ***ONE-POUND GOSPEL***), featuring character designs by Yuji ***"PROJECT A-KO"*** Moriyama.

THE BUZZ: Heartwarming to the max, eventual emotional payoff of romance far exceeds anything else in current U.S. anime offerings. But unlike its original Japanese weekly TV broadcast (or weekly *manga*, for that matter), American fans will be chewing nails between tapes for some time until the conclusion of the not-so-short series.

Makes a good pair with: Viewing with ***RANMA 1/2*** or ***URUSEI YATSURA*** for a Rumiko double-whammy is not recommended, as the over-the-top wackiness of Takahashi's other works will overwhelm ***MAISON***'s low-key hormonal goofiness. Try watching your favorite soap or maybe ***END OF SUMMER*** (adult viewers only!) for more relationship-oriented passion plays.

M.D. GEIST II: DEATH FORCE

OAV • ON SALE NOW • U.S. MANGA CORPS • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: The "Death Force" unleashed in the original ***M.D. GEIST*** video is rampaging all over the planet, and the surviving remnants of humanity try to fight back, while "Most Dangerous" Geist goes head to head with the *prototype* "Most Dangerous Soldier." Features story, direction and mecha designs by ***GEIST***'s original creator Koichi Ohata (***GENOCYBER***). Partially funded by its U.S. release company.

THE BUZZ: Arriving nearly ten years after the original ***M.D. GEIST***'s Japanese release, ***M.D. GEIST II*** makes for more mayhem, more armored warriors, more blood and guts.

Makes a good pair with: ***ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK***, ***ROAD WARRIOR*** or other post-apocalyptic, bullets-blazin', dark future movie of your choice.

© 1996 Koichi Ohata • Zero G Room • Nippon Columbia • Central Park Media

MIYUKI-CHAN IN WONDERLAND

OAV • ON SALE AUGUST • A.D. VISION • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: The classic ***ALICE IN WONDERLAND*** tale gets a revamp by fan-favorite Clamp (***TOKYO BABYLON***, ***RG VEDA***, ***MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH***, ***X/1999***).

THE BUZZ: Clamp's girl-pleasing style immediately identifiable, but ***ALICE*** is not exactly the most solid ground in fantasyland. Sheer weirdness factor might be a turnoff for some, a turn-on for others. Surreal.

Makes a good pair with: ***RG VEDA*** for anime Clamp overload, or for more heady girl-oriented fantasy, try the live-action movies ***LEGEND*** or ***THE COMPANY OF WOLVES***.

MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR

OAV SERIES • ON SALE OCTOBER • U.S. MANGA CORPS • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: Mecha series featuring likable futuristic Police squad of robot pilots and their adventures. All-star production, including character designs by Akemi Takada (***KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD***), mecha designs by Yutaka Izubuchi (***GUNDAM 0080: A WAR IN THE POCKET***), with direction by Mamoru Oshii (***GHOST IN THE SHELL***).

THE BUZZ: Ensemble show in the tradition of ***HILL STREET BLUES*** gives both major and minor characters time to develop. Series often quite talky and lacking in major action for a mecha show. Extremely silly parody episodes regularly alternate with serious themes.

© 1994 Headgear• Shogakukan • Bandai

Makes a good pair with: In live-action, the aforementioned ***HILL STREET BLUES***, or other live-action ensemble cop show. For anime, check out the first two ***PATLABOR*** movies to see the cast in movie quality animation.

NEON GENESIS EVANGELION

TV SERIES • ON SALE AUGUST • A.D. VISION • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

THE SETUP: Angels (don't ask) invade the Earth and only a few teens and their super robots can save humanity in a '70s-style robot show directed by fan-favorite Studio Gainax (***NADIA***, ***GUNBUSTER***).

THE BUZZ: Features lots of nekkid anime babes in skintight pilot suits and ***ULTRAMAN***-style action. Heavy psychological tone is perfect for Pink Floyd-listening teens, combining giant robots and song lyric-like heavy messages in alien invasion story. WARNING: Avant garde plotline may not turn out to be what you expected. Not for those resistant to a little soul-searching or whose illusions shatter easily.

© 1996 Gainax • Project Eva • TV Tokyo • NAS

Makes a good pair with: See the shows that inspired its creation! Check out transforming robot anime ***DANCOUGAR***, or the live-action monster movie of your choice. Our recommendation—***ULTRAMAN*** or ***THUNDERBIRDS***. Follow with a healthy dose of ***TWIN PEAKS*** or Pink Floyd's ***THE WALL***.

OH MY GODDESS!

OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • ANIMEIGO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/"HYBRID" LD

THE SETUP: A boy gets a wrong number on the phone one day, and is granted a wish, and therefore, ends up with a goddess for a roommate. Then he also gets her big sister, then her little sister, etc., etc....then love blossoms, but can the pairing of a human and a goddess ever work out? And if only those sisters would quit meddling!

© 1994 Kosuke Fujishima • Kodansha • TBS • KSS

THE BUZZ: New English version of subtitled favorite. Goddesses are heavenly to look at, shy male hero is charmingly gawky, lots of magic. Awkward romantic interludes between boy and his goddess constantly interfered with by meddling sisters makes for heartwarming hijinks.

Makes a good pair with: ***MAISON IKKOKU*** for like-minded story, ***YOU'RE UNDER ARREST*** for more Kosuke Fujishima-styling, or (for a change of pace) try the 1980s Olivia Newton John musical vehicle ***XANADU*** for a live-action take on the man-meets-goddess concept (in this case, a classical Greek muse on roller skates!).

RANMA 1/2: FASTER, KASUMI! KILL! KILL!

OAV • ON SALE NOW • VIZ VIDEO • ENGLISH VHS

© Rumiko Takahashi • Shogakukan • Kitty • Fuji TV

THE SETUP: Latest pair of ***RANMA 1/2*** OAVs, both featuring zany possession plotlines. An evil ogre possesses one cast member after another, finally settling in with happy homemaker Kasumi, who does evil deeds in a very nurturing way. Then, Akane runs afoul of a cursed doll who takes over her body to take revenge on Ranma, leaving Akane trapped in the doll's body.

THE BUZZ: Akane's jaw-dropping nekkid babe moment in the second episode an extreme hot flash for ***RANMA*** fans. The last volume of the ***RANMA 1/2*** OAV series means that it'll be some time before more original video hijinks are brought over to America.

Makes a good pair with: ***GIRLFRIEND FROM HELL*** (live-action).

RECORD OF LODOSS WAR

OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • U.S. MANGA CORPS • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS

© 1990 Group SNE • Kadokawa Shoten • Marubeni Corp. • TBS

THE SETUP: A traveling band of adventurers—fighter, thief, elf, dwarf, wizard—take on dragons and sorcerers in a ***Dungeons and Dragons***™-like fantasy tale, featuring character concepts by Yutaka Izubuchi, revamped for animation by Nobuteru Yûki (***BATTLE ANGEL***).

THE BUZZ: New English version of previously subtitled-only release. Fabulous dragons, incredible animation quality, beautiful music. Role-playing-style fantasy realm realized practically perfectly. Fantasy fans or J.R.R. Tolkein readers have little to complain about.

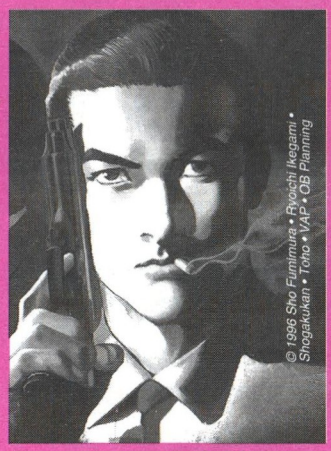
Makes a good pair with: In live-action, John Boorman's ***EXCALIBUR*** still can't be beat. Anime-wise, try ***RG VEDA*** or ***HEROIC LEGEND OF ARISLAN*** for like-minded fantasy fare.

SANCTUARY

OAV • ON SALE OCTOBER • VIZ VIDEO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: Two handsome young men take different paths to power in modern-day Japan—one choosing politics, the other, crime. Together, they hatch a plan to change the very face of the nation. Based on the popular manga drawn by Ryoichi Ikegami (***MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL***).

THE BUZZ: Not for kids. Sex, nekkid babes, mob violence and political corruption. Guns a' blazin'. Political angle is rather non-escapist, though the ***UNTOUCHABLES***-like cops-and-robbers drama provides a nice balance to the backdoor dealmaking.



© 1996 Sho Fumimura • Ryoichi Ikegami • Shogakukan • Toho • VAP • OB Planning

Makes a good pair with: ***CRYING FREEMAN*** for more Ikegami styling, or the John Woo movie of your choice for more gun-to-the-head hijinks.

THE SLAYERS

TV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • SOFTWARE SCULPTORS • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: A band of fantasy-styled adventurers go the ***CONAN THE BARBARIAN*** route of a-stealin' and a-sword-swingin' while fighting magic-usin' nasties, featuring the multi-talented Megumi Hayashibara ("Momiji," ***BLUE SEED***; "Nuku-Nuku," ***ALL-PURPOSE CULTURAL CAT-GIRL NUKU-NUKU***, etc.) as the fiery-tempered main character.

THE BUZZ: Jaded viewers need not apply, as novelty value is low, but the combination of sword 'n' sorcery with ***RANMA***-esque hijinks makes for a good-natured and lighthearted fantasy-themed combination.

Makes a good pair with: ***RANMA 1/2***, ***ALL-PURPOSE CULTURAL CAT GIRL NUKU-NUKU***, or other funny fightin' comedy of your choice.

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SUPER ATRAGON

OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • A.D. VISION • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/ BILINGUAL LD

THE SETUP: Sci-fi adventure story based on an over-the-top thriller by Japanese novelist Harumi Oshikawa, which was also the basis for a 1960s live-action film, ***ATRAGON***, directed by Inoshiro Hondo (***THE MYSTERIANS***), with special effects by ***ULTRAMAN***'s creator, Eiji Tsuburaya. Deadly serious character designs by Yoshikazu "***VENUS WARS***" Yasuhiko, and neato-keeno mecha designs by Makoto "***GIANT ROBO***" Kobayashi.

THE BUZZ: Political angle of story (Japan kicks ass with unused secret weapon from WWII) may be a little uncomfortable, but undeniably fascinating, to American viewers. Wacky '60s-like ***GIANT ROBO***-esque machinery done in fabulous animation.

Makes a good pair with: See the original ***ATRAGON***! In animation, ***BIG WARS*** (for political angle) or ***GIANT ROBO*** (for style, man...style!).

© 1995 Kaitei Gunkan Production Committee

SUPER BESTIAL MACHINE GOD DANCOUGAR

TV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • SOFTWARE SCULPTORS • SUBTITLED VHS

THE SETUP: An elite team of young people is chosen to pilot four robots which combine to form a super robot to fight an alien invasion of the Earth.

THE BUZZ: Robot fans should go crazy with pleasure for extremely ***POWER RANGERS***-like robot transformation and cool backstabbing friends-turned-enemies plotline. Five-episode-a-tape format gives you a big ol' chunk of story and makes an addiction affordable, though subtitles may be a bit of a hurdle for younger kids who would most appreciate the ***POWER RANGERS*** connection.

Makes a good pair with: ***POWER RANGERS*** (of course), ***RONIN WARRIORS*** or ***TEKNOMAN*** (or any other story where heroes are *HEROES*).

TENCHI MUYÔ!: TENCHI IN LOVE

MOVIE • ON SALE NOW • PIONEER LDCA • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD

© 1988 Soeishinsha • Pony Canyon

THE SETUP: Tenchi travels back in time twenty-six years to discover the source of a kink in the space-time continuum that causes the whole history of the universe to change. With a title like ***TENCHI IN LOVE***, what do *YOU* think it's about?

THE BUZZ: Eagerly awaited ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** theatrical feature with top of the line production values. More fun, more hijinks on a very large scale. International effort with music by Christopher Franke of Tangerine Dream and Nina Hagen. So when's the next one, already?

Makes a good pair with: More ***TENCHI***, duh! Go for a marathon! In live-action, ***BACK THE THE FUTURE*** fits the bill.

VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU

OAV SERIES • ON SALE NOW • ANIMEIGO • ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/"HYBRID" LD

THE SETUP: A spiritualist who doesn't really believe in the supernatural meets Miyu, a golden-eyed vampire princess, and her mysterious companion. The supernatural pair seem to be fighting for humanity rather than against it, but can any being that feeds on human life be good instead of evil? Directed by Toshihiro Hirano (***MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH***, ***ICZER-ONE***, ***HADES PROJECT ZEORYMER***).

© Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • Toei Animation

THE BUZZ: New English version on sale of the classic horror OAV series. ***MIYU***'s delicately handled horror and sensuous art direction well suited to the tastes of vampire cult started by Anne Rice's ***INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*** (and fed by the role-playing game ***Vampire the Masquerade***).

Makes a good pair with: The live-action movie ***INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*** (natch) featuring the surprisingly yummy pairing of Brad Pitt and a blond Tom Cruise, or the animated ***OGRE SLAYER*** or ***CURSE OF THE UNDEAD YOMA***—both Kei Kusunoki stories, which have a similar tone to ***MIYU*** in their treatment of romantic *shôjo*-style horror. ☆

© Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • Toei Animation

THIS MONTH'S COVER STORY
SAILOR MOON

As of this writing, you can still catch ***SAILOR MOON*** on U.S. broadcast TV, though it may soon be moving to cable television. Bandai America asks that fans who want to express their support for the show write to: **D.I.C. Entertainment • Fan Appreciation Department • 303 N. Glenoaks Blvd. • Burbank, CA 91502.**

Try to remember, Moonies— ***STAR TREK*** took over *ten years* to finally gain recognition for its overwhelming fan base. If you want to see more ***SAILOR MOON*** in the U.S., do write, but be polite and *patient*...and we may yet see more someday! In the meantime, for more information, the World Wide Web is brimming with ***SAILOR MOON*** "web sites," ranging from everything you ever wanted to know about the show's Japanese origins, to pages focusing solely on the English version. Do a search, and see if you can't find something to broaden your mind! For those of you who need something in print, the indispensible reference books ***MEET SAILOR MOON*** and ***SAILOR MOON: FRIENDS & FOES*** are on sale from Kodansha America for approximately US$4.95 each in bookstores everywhere. For those of you who bought the ***SAILOR MOON*** "Adventure Dolls," turn to page 73 for some brand-new ways to enjoy them! Moon Prism Power! ☆

THE ANIMERICA TOP TEN

AMERICA'S BESTSELLING ANIME

Based on Pre-Orders Compiled by Capital City Distribution, Inc.
(During the Month of July 1996)

1 .....***RANMA 1/2 HARD BATTLE: DHARMA CHAMELEON***
Viz Video • $24.95

2 .....***RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING-GOES MARTIAL ARTS SUBTITLED EDITION: CAT-FU FIGHTING***
Viz Video • $29.95

3 .....***PLEASE SAVE MY EARTH: THE MOMENT'S MEM'RY***
Viz Video • $24.95

4 .....***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 2***
ENGLISH
A.D. Vision • $19.98

5 .....***BATTLE SKIPPER • VOL. 1***
U.S. Manga Corps • $12.95

6 .....***IRIA: ZEIRAM THE ANIMATION • VOL. 3***
U.S. Manga Corps • $29.95

7 .....***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 2***
SUBTITLED
A.D. Vision • $24.95

8 .....***DEMON BEAST INVASION • VOL. 5***
Anime 18 • $29.95

9 .....***GOLDEN BOY***
ENGLISH
A.D. Vision • $19.98

10 .....***BATTLE ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL***
ENGLISH
AnimEigo • $19.95

THE ANIMERICA TOP TEN

JAPAN'S BESTSELLING LDs

1.....***TENCHI MUYÔ! TV • VOL. 10***
天地無用！TV版10
NO NEED FOR TENCHI!
Pioneer LDC • ¥5974

2.....***SHIN SEIKI EVANGELION • GENESIS: 03***
新世紀エヴァンゲリオン
NEON GENESIS EVANGELION
King Record • ¥5800

3.....***SLAYERS • VOL. 7***
スレイヤーズ　7
Bandai Visual • ¥5974

4.....***SHINPI NO SEKAI EL-HAZARD • TV VOL. 3***
神秘の世界エルハザードTV版3
EL-HAZARD, THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD
Pioneer LDCA • ¥6180

5.....***MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH PART 2 • VOL. 7***
魔法騎士レイアース第二章　Vol.7
MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH
Polygram • ¥4800

6.....***SÔKÔ KIHEI VOTOMS COMPLETE COLLECTION 2***
装甲騎兵ボトムズコレクション.2
ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS
Youmex • ¥36,050

7.....***HA-Ô DAIKEI RYÛ KNIGHT 16: ADEU LEGEND II • VOL. 3***
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LORD OF LORDS RYU KNIGHT
Bandai Visual • ¥8034

8.....***SHIN SEIKI EVANGELION • GENESIS 0:2***
新世紀エヴァンゲリオン
NEON GENESIS EVANGELION
King Record • ¥5800

9.....***CAN-CAN BUNNY EXTRA • VOL. 1***
きゃんきゃんバニー　エクストラ
Pink Pineapple • ¥6800

10....***TOEI TV TOKUSATSU SHUDAIKA DAIZENSHÛ***
東映TV特撮主題歌大全集.2
"Toei TV F/X Main Theme Collection 2"
Toei Video • ¥4841

Please note that our translations are indicated with parentheses and quotes, while English titles provided by the Japanese production companies are set in all caps.

The Bestselling Animated Videos, Compiled by Original Confidence Research Company (As of 5/6/96)

ANIME ON SALE THIS MONTH IN JAPAN and AMERICA

IMPORT LD BOX SETS

8/1	***GHIBLI GA IPPAI ("A Whole Lotta Ghibli")*** *(Includes: LAPUTA • TOTORO • GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES • KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE • WHISPER OF THE HEART • ON YOUR MARK • NAUSICAÄ • ONLY YESTERDAY • PORCO ROSSO • I CAN HEAR THE OCEAN • POMPOKO • More)* ジブリがいっぱい Tokuma Japan Communications • ¥98,000
8/25	***THEATRICAL VERSION MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM MASTER GRADE BOX*** *(Serialized collector's box set includes GUNDAM compilation movies I, II and III (CAV), Saturn video game animation footage, CD-ROM version of 5-volume Sunrise art book collection)* 劇場版機動戦士ガンダム Bandai Visual • ¥46,350
9/10	***HIATARI RYÔKÔ*** 日当たり良好！ Kitty • ¥72,000
10/1	***AOKI RYÛSEI SPT LAYZNER • VOL. 2*** *("Blue Meteor SPT Layzner")* 蒼き流星レイズナー VAP • ¥24,720

Please note that our translations are indicated with parentheses and quotes, while English titles provided by the Japanese production companies are set in all caps.

IMPORT VHS/LD

8/1	***MUSEKININ KANCHÔ TYLER • VOL. 8• CHIJÔ YORI EIEN NI*** *("Irresponsible Captain Tyler, "From Earth to Eternity, Part Two")* 無責任艦長タイラー長編（地上より永遠に。後編） Tyler Project (VAP) • ¥7004 (VHS/LD)
8/1	***SHIN SEIKI GPX CYBER FORMULA SAGA • ROUND 1*** *("New Century GPX Cyber Formula Saga")* 新世紀GPXサイバーフォーミュラ.サガ ROUND.1 VAP • ¥4944 (VHS/LD)
8/7	***KEY THE METAL IDOL • Ver. 13, "VIRUS"PART TWO*** KEY THE METAL IDOL Ver.13 「ヴァイラスII」 Pony Canyon • ¥2500 (VHS)/ ¥5000 (LD)
8/21	***BLUE SEED 2 • VOL. 2*** BLUE SEED 2 第2巻 King Record • ¥5800 (VHS/LD)
8/21	***BOKU NO MARIE*** *MY DEAR MARIE* ぼくのマリー Victor Entertainment • ¥5800 (VHS/LD)
8/25	***YÛSHA SHIREI DAGUON • VOL. 1*** *("Hero Command Daguon")* 勇者指令ダグオン Victor • ¥5800 (VHS/LD)
8/25	***BURN UP W! • FILE 3*** BURN-UP W FILE.3 Media Ring • ¥5800 (VHS/LD)
8/21	***YAMATO 2520 • VOL. 3*** YAMATO2520 Vol.3「戦闘」 Voyager Entertainment/Bandai Visual • ¥9800 (VHS/LD)
8/96	***AOZORA SHÔJO TAI • VOL. 6, "KAKO YORI EIEN NI"*** *("Blue Sky Girls' Squadron, "From the Past to Eternity")* 青空少女隊DEFCON-VI「過去より永遠に」 Victor • ¥5800 (VHS/LD)

DOMESTIC LASER DISC

8/6	***THE HAKKENDEN • VOL. 7*** *[BILINGUAL, CLOSED-CAPTIONED]* Pioneer LDCA • US$39.98
8/6	***SLAYERS • VOL. 3*** *[BILINGUAL, CLOSED-CAPTIONED]* Software Sculptors • US$39.95
8/14	***BATTLE ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL*** *["HYBRID"]* AnimEigo • US$39.95
8/14	***VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU • VOL. 1*** *["HYBRID"]* AnimEigo • US$39.95
8/27	***GOLDEN BOY*** *[BILINGUAL, CLOSE-CAPTIONED]* A.D. Vision • US$39.95
8/27	***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 2*** *[BILINGUAL, CLOSE-CAPTIONED]* A.D. Vision • US$39.95
8/27	***SUPER ATRAGON 1*** *[BILINGUAL, CLOSE-CAPTIONED]* A.D. Vision • US$39.95

ENGLISH VHS

8/6	***THE HAKKENDEN • VOL. 7*** Pioneer LDCA • US$24.98
8/6	***LA BLUE GIRL • VOLS. 1-5*** Anime 18 • US$29.95 each
8/6	***LA BLUE GIRL COLLECTOR'S SET*** Anime 18 • US$129.95
8/6	***M.D. GEIST ACTION PACK*** U.S. Manga Corps • US$34.95
8/6	***M.D. GEIST DIRECTOR'S CUT*** U.S. Manga Corps • US$19.95
8/6	***M.D. GEIST II: DEATH FORCE*** U.S. Manga Corps • US$19.95
8/6	***SLAYERS • VOL. 2*** Software Sculptors • US$19.95
8/6	***SOHRYUDEN • VOL. 6*** U.S. Manga Corps • US$29.95
8/6	***SUIKODEN DEMON CENTURY*** A.D. Vision • US$29.95
8/9	***MAISON IKKOKU: SPRING WASABI*** Viz Video • US$24.95
8/20	***GUYVER • VOL. 7*** Manga Entertainment • US$19.95
8/20	***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION • VOL. 1*** A.D. Vision • US$24.95
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8/28	***OH MY GODDESS! EVERGREEN HOLY NIGHT*** AnimEigo • US$14.95

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8/6	***SUIKODEN DEMON CENTURY*** A.D. Vision • US$29.95
8/20	***GUNBUSTER • VOL. 1*** Manga Entertainment • US$19.95
8/20	***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION • VOL. 1*** A.D. Vision • US$29.95
8/23	***RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING-GOES MARTIAL ARTS SUBTITLED EDITION: CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE*** Viz Video • US$29.95
8/27	***BLUE SEED • VOL. 4*** A.D. Vision • US$29.95
8/27	***MIYUKI-CHAN IN WONDERLAND*** A.D. Vision • US$29.95

ANIMERICA RADAR

Anime Info for the Otaku Generation. TM

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

SAILOR MARS
Raye Hino / Rei Hino
Birthday: 17 April
Star Sign: Aries
Element: Fire
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/skills: Knowledge of wards and talismans to fight evil, has the ability to read the future through fire, and two black crows as companions. The strong and individualistic Rei looks up to her successful father more than anyone else, but since he is often away from home, she only sees him very rarely. Rei has a crush on her father's handsome assistant, and unknown to her, the feeling is mutual. The assistant constantly sends Rei perfectly chosen presents, claiming that the gifts were selected by her father (when in fact, he selected the gifts himself).

Unique to the animation, the penniless "Yuichiro" falls in love with Rei at first sight and decides to be a priest. In the U.S. version, he appears as "Chad," a burned-out rock star who stays at the temple to learn from Raye's grandfather and recuperate from his last tour.

Later, after the series had been on the air for a season or so, Takeuchi all but gushed about the success of the animation, citing herself as one of the show's biggest fans, and enthusing about the voice-actors chosen for the show, especially the voice of "Usagi," Kotono Mitsuishi. "I really like her. Sometimes I wonder if she might understand Usagi's character better than I do. (The animated characters) may look a little different from what I draw, but the characters' voices are exactly the way I envisioned. They understand that Usagi is best with her screw a little loose, so in that sense they have her down perfect. All of the voice-actors are exactly to my image. Among them—although he won't show up anymore—Jadeite's voice, Masaya Onosaka, was my favorite. After I heard his voice, I regretted killing off the character so soon!"

In fact, Takeuchi has something of a reputation for being unafraid to kill off her male characters without remorse. "It's just that I don't love them as much," she laughs. "Usually, women artists like drawing men more, but I can't sympathize with my male characters. I have more fun drawing female characters. It is *shôjo* manga, and my editor and readers both like to see more pretty boys show their stuff, but I really can't scrape up the love for them or let up on them. In the TV version, they're all drawn so lovingly that I sometimes regret having killed them off a little too easily, but really, it's because of my lack of love for them. Conversely, I envy them. I *should* be more sympathetic to my male characters—but I save my love for my girls."

girls, boys and witches

Whether Takeuchi actually resembles her own main character or not (reportedly, her editor has teased her by saying that her personality resembles Usagi's very much, to which Takeuchi responds with a laugh, "That's not true! I'm not that bubbly!"), the uniqueness of ***SAILOR MOON***'s main character Usagi ("Serena" in the U.S. version) is still the first thing readers and viewers can't help but notice about the story. Exuberant, extroverted, comics-reading, video-game playing, boyfriend-dreaming...Usagi is no sterling role model, but she's exactly what Takeuchi intended her to be—a regular Japanese teenager. "Heroes of justice tend to come from a specific type, but I wanted to make her unconventional. She's a crybaby and lazy and sometimes even cheats a little. I wanted to draw a normal girl like that." Usagi is, Takeuchi admits, "pretty self-centered." Even as the

SAILOR MERCURY
Name: Amy Anderson / Ami Mizuno
Birthday: 10 September
Star Sign: Virgo
Element: Water
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/ skills: Rational, highly analytical, computer savvy. Has a miniature supercomputer disguised as a compact and a pair of special scanning goggles. Though initially not one of the characters upon which Takeuchi had focused a great deal of attention ("I had put most of my efforts into characters like Rei," Takeuchi states), the animated Sailor Mercury quickly became one of the most popular characters in Japan, frequently fighting it out with the likes of the eternally beloved Nausicaä for the top spot as "favorite character" in Japanese animation magazine readers' polls.

MOONLIGHT MADNESS
One story Takeuchi cites as having left a great impression on her as an artist is not from manga or animation, but the true-life story of NASA's Apollo project. Not surprisingly, one of the reasons Takeuchi cites for the entire idea of fighters reincarnated from the moon comes from her own desire to go there. "I always wanted to go to the Moon," she says. In fact, not one, but *two* of her ***SAILOR MOON*** manga compilations feature a photo of the artist on the dust jacket flyleaf pictured next to her dream. In ***SAILOR MOON*** Volume 9, Takeuchi is posed with a moon rocket at NASA, and in Vol. 12, she is seen shaking the hand of a space-suited astronaut.

character grows in strength and maturity over the story's run, "...her selfishness and self-centeredness come to the surface too. I keep on drawing her thinking, 'What a little witch!'"

But even so, the story of ***SAILOR MOON*** is really Usagi's story, and her evolution from a girl who, in the words of the English version of the animation's opening song, "never runs away from a real fight" (but definitely runs from plenty of practice ones) to a strong, capable woman—an independent woman, wife, mother, superhero and queen—all at once.

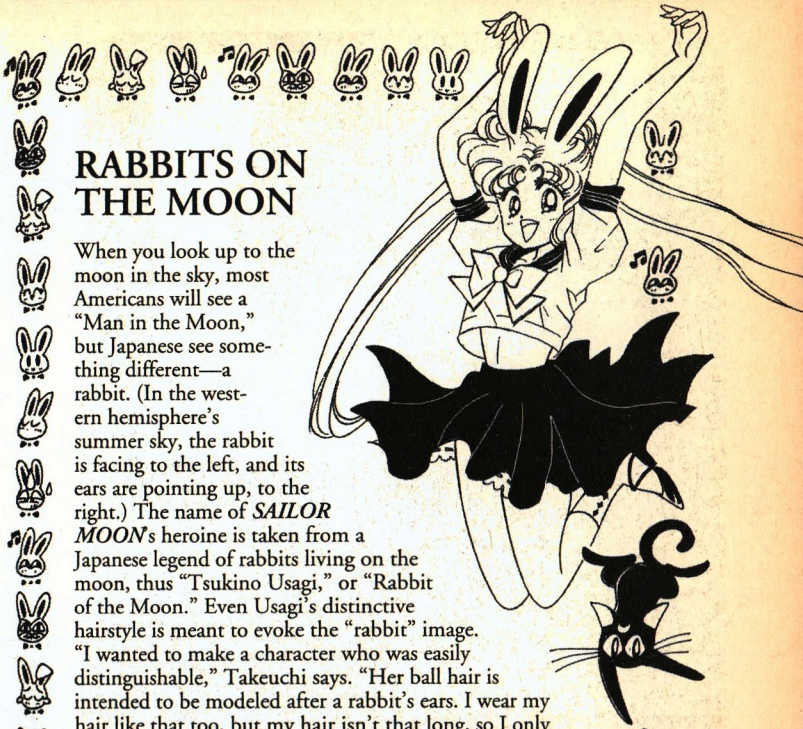
moon madness

Even though the target readership of the ***SAILOR MOON*** manga is that of pre-high school girls, the animated series opened the door to fans of all ages, and the animated show rocketed in popularity among all age groups. Usagi and her friends were sympathetic, human characters that nearly everyone could identify with, and the story itself—which encompassed reincarnation, time travel, star-crossed lovers and great kingdoms at war—was exciting, mysterious and romantic. "No one probably expected it," Takeuchi says of the show's success, but she confirms that she had indeed taken special care to give her work an extra spin that viewers and readers older than NAKAYOSHI's target audience could appreciate. "I wanted them all to become fans, and I worked to make that happen," she says modestly.

As ***SAILOR MOON*** gains popularity all over the world, Naoko Takeuchi is becoming a recognized name in more than one country. But her popularity abroad, compared to popularity at home, is "...something so far away. I can't really believe it, and it's hard to get a real feel for it. After all, I've always been drawing manga for Japanese children." Even so, she is both surprised and excited to hear of the show's popularity in America. "Really? Is it really that popular?" she wonders. "I'm really happy to hear that!" When asked if she'd seen the English version of the animated ***SAILOR MOON***, she answers, "Of course!" and goes on to point out that "***SAILOR MOON*** is supposed to be a story about Japanese girls, but there's no problem seeing them as American girls. It's natural and a wonder at the same time." ☆

RABBITS ON THE MOON

When you look up to the moon in the sky, most Americans will see a "Man in the Moon," but Japanese see something different—a rabbit. (In the western hemisphere's summer sky, the rabbit is facing to the left, and its ears are pointing up, to the right.) The name of ***SAILOR MOON***'s heroine is taken from a Japanese legend of rabbits living on the moon, thus "Tsukino Usagi," or "Rabbit of the Moon." Even Usagi's distinctive hairstyle is meant to evoke the "rabbit" image. "I wanted to make a character who was easily distinguishable," Takeuchi says. "Her ball hair is intended to be modeled after a rabbit's ears. I wear my hair like that too, but my hair isn't that long, so I only get the ball part. I always wished for flowing hair. That's how I added the long part on top of them."



SAILOR JUPITER
Lita / Makoto Kino
Birthday: 5 December
Star Sign: Sagittarius
Element: Wood
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/skills: Cooking, boyfriend-collecting, figure-skating.
Jupiter often tries to put on a show of being tough, but in actuality, as one of the tallest of the Sailors, she is very self-conscious about her height, often over-compensating by wearing overly feminine clothes.

THE "GIRL" CAN'T HELP IT

Zoycite, or "Zoisite" (named after the mineral, as are nearly all of the villains, as a nod to Takeuchi's love of jewelry) appears in the U.S. version of the animation as a female character, but in the Japanese animated version of *SAILOR MOON*, Zoisite was originally a classic *shôjo/bishônen* character—the rather feminine "beautiful man," fiercely devoted to his equally beautiful companion, Malachite.

NAOKO TAKEUCHI MINI-BIO

Birthplace: Japan
Blood Type: A
Birthdate: 15 March
Star Sign: Pisces
Marital Status: Single
Influences: ***SPACE CRUISER YAMATO***, NASA's Apollo project, ***ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS***, ***SPACE PIRATE CAPTAIN HARLOCK***, and "too many more to list."
Favorite Animation: ***SAILOR MOON***
Favorite of her own work: ***SAILOR MOON***
Title of her own work that she would remake if she had the chance: ***SAILOR MOON***
Hobbies: Driving (reportedly, she owns both a Porsche *and* a Ferrari), shopping, reading, collecting antique furniture, idling at home.
Special training as a manga artist: None
If you hadn't become a manga artist, what would you have been?: "A bride."
Philosophy: "(Being a manga artist) is a very creative, and very time-consuming, hard job, but it's very fun work. But it takes determination and energy."
Message to English-speaking fans: "I'd love to read your fan letters, and I also love fan art. I'd love to see them. And thank you very much for being ***SAILOR MOON*** fans! I'm very happy. I hope I can meet and talk to you all."

Special thanks to ANIMAGE magazine, Kodansha, Ltd., Sam Yoshiba and Naoko Takeuchi herself for finding time in her busy schedule for us. Stay tuned to ANIMERICA for an official address to send fan art and letters to Ms. Takeuchi!

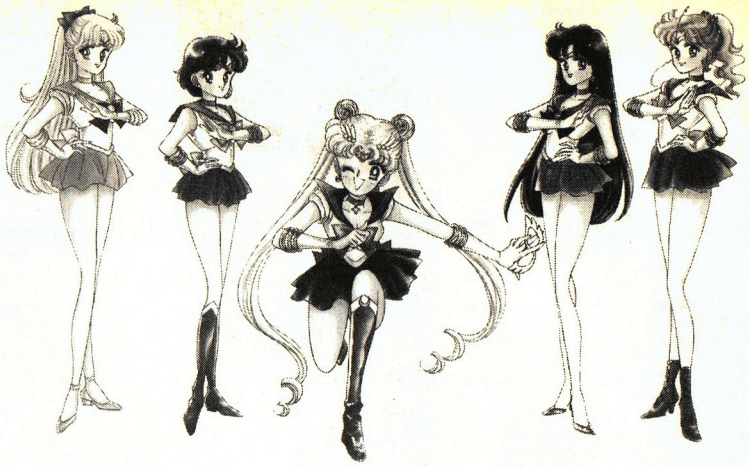
"WHAT'S THAT THING CALLED?" or SAILOR MOON GADGET LIST

SAILOR MOON has never lacked for magical gadgets, but keeping track of which one is which can be mighty confusing. Below is a selection of some of the magical items in Sailor Moon's armory. Compare the name used in the English version of the animation (in bold when available) to the Japanese (after the slash).

Sailor Moon	Transformation Brooch • **Disguise Pen**/Transformation Pen • Communication Device • **Cosmic Crescent Wand** /Moon Stick
Sailor Moon R	**Moon Star Locket**/ Crystal Star • **Moon Scepter** /Cutie Moon Rod
Sailor Moon S	Cosmic Heart Compact • Spiral Heart Moon Rod • Holy Grail
Sailor Moon Super S	Crisis Moon Compact • Kaleido Moon Scope

THE HOLY GRAIL

In ***SAILOR MOON S***, a fusion of three talismans formed from the "heart crystals" of other Sailor Scouts—Sailor Neptune's Deep Aqua Mirror, Sailor Pluto's Garnet Orb and Sailor Uranus' Space Sword—form the "Holy Grail," which allows Sailor Moon to transform into Super Sailor Moon, combining the powers of all the other Sailors into one.

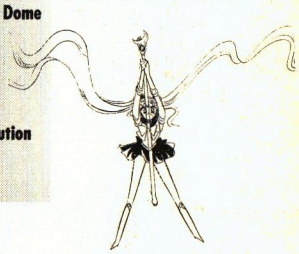


KEY TO THE NAME PUNS

Most of the names in **SAILOR MOON** have some reference or pun included in them, such as Tuxedo Mask's real name, Mamoru, which means "protect," aptly describing his role in the series. Aside from the mineral-based names of the villains, a handy key to the puns in the Sailors' names is to read them as Japanese sentences. Mercury's name—which in the Japanese style would be read surname first—"Mizuno Ami"—if broken up a little differently, reads "*Mizu no Ami*," or "Ami of water." Sailor Mercury's elemental power is, of course, water.

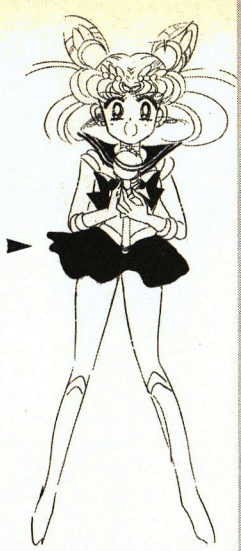
MOON ATTACK!
SAILOR MOON SPECIAL ATTACKS

	SAILOR MOON		SAILOR MOON R		SAILOR MOON S	SAILOR MOON SUPER S
	Japanese	English	Japanese	English	Japanese	Japanese
Sailor Moon	**Moon Tiara Action • Moon Healing Escalation**	**Moon Tiara Action • Moon Healing Escalation**	**Moon Princess Halation**	**Moon Scepter Elimination**	**Moon Spiral Heart Attack • Rainbow Moon Heart Ache**	**Moon Gorgeous Meditation**
Sailor Mercury	**Mercury Shavon Spray** [*"Shavon" means, literally, "bubbles"—Ed.*]	**Mercury Bubbles Blast**	**Shavon Spray Freezing • Shine Aqua Illusion • Double Shavon Spray Freezing**	**Mercury Ice Bubble Freeze • Mercury Ice Storm Blast**		**Mercury Aqua Rhapsody**
Sailor Mars	**Akuryô Fôji no Ofuda • Fire Soul**	**Mars Fire Ignite • Mars Firestorm Flash**	**Fire Soul Bird • Burning Mandala**	**Mars Firebird Strike • Mars Celestial Fire Surround**		**Mars Flame Sniper**
Sailor Jupiter	**Supreme Thunder**	**Jupiter Thunder Crash**	**Supreme Thunder Dragon • Sparkling Wide Pressure**	**Jupiter Thunder Dragon • Jupiter Thundercrash Zap**		**Jupiter Oak Evolution**
Sailor Venus	**Crescent Beam**	**Venus Crescent Beam Smash**	**Crescent Beam Shower • Venus Love Me Chain**	**Venus Meteor Shower • Venus Love Chain Encircle**		**Venus Love And Beauty Shock**
Rini/Little Sailor Moon			**Luna-P Magic**	**Kitty Magic/Kitty Power**	**Pink Sugar Heart Attack**	
Sailor Pluto					**Dead Scream • Dark Dome Close**	
Sailor Uranus					**World Shaking**	
Sailor Neptune					**Deep Submerge**	
Sailor Saturn					**Death Reborn Revolution**	
All-Sailor Combinations			**Sailor Planet Power**	**Sailor Planet Power**		



RINI /Chibi Usa (also known as "Small Lady")
Birthday: 30 June
Star Sign: Cancer
Introduced in: Sailor Moon R
Extra equipment/skills: Luna Ball/Luna-P, Chibi Moon Compact and Crystal Carillon. After being rescued from her evil possession by the Sailors' love, Chibi Usa is sent back to the future, only to return a moment later with a note from her mother, Neo Queen Serenity, which explains that Chibi Usa needs to stay in the past, in order for her to learn how to be a good Sailor Soldier.

BLACK LADY
Turned into the evil Black Lady by Wiseman, a newly grown-up Chiba Usa attacks the Sailors and hypnotizes Tuxedo Mask, jealously planning to keep him to herself. She is finally saved by the love of her friends and her future mother and father—Sailor Moon and Tuxedo Mask—and joins her powers with Sailor Moon to fight off Wiseman.



NEO QUEEN SERENITY
In the 30th century, Sailor Moon rules a new Silver Millenium with her consort, King Endymion. In this new future, no one dies—everyone has eternal life and seemingly endless youth and beauty. Neo Queen Serenity's daughter, Chibi Usa—even though she looks like an elementary school girl—is approximately 900 years old when she first arrives on Earth!

KING ENDYMION
Made famous in sources as diverse as classical mythology, the poetry of Keats, and the novels of Anne Rice, the name "Endymion" refers to a mythical figure kept forever young through eternal sleep, loved by Selene, a.k.a., Selena, a.k.a. the Greek goddess of the Moon.

SAILOR SATURN
Hotaru Tomoe
Birthday: 6 January
Star Sign: Capricorn
Introduced: Sailor Moon S
Extra equipment/skills: Silence Glaive.
Saturn is the Sailor that "must not awaken," for if she awakens, the world will end. Sailor Saturn's awesome "Silence Glaive" has one power—to destroy worlds. When the evil world of Nemesis tries to take over the Earth, Saturn appears to do just that, and then reverts to an infant who is then placed in the care of Neptune and Uranus. When she reappears in ***SAILOR MOON SAILOR STARS***, she quickly begins to mature into a young woman once more.

QUEEN METALLIA
Imprisoned superior of Queen Beryl, the "Negaforce" referred to in the English version is actually Queen Metallia. Metallia has as little patience for failure by her subordinates as Beryl herself, and in the Japanese version of the animated series, takes over for the final fight with Sailor Moon.

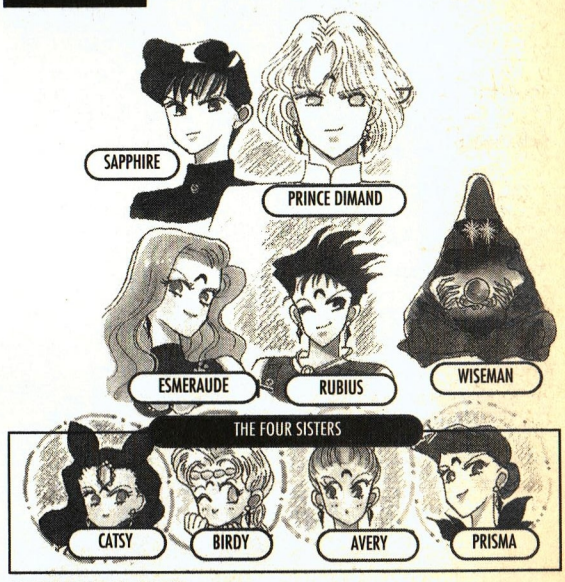
QUEEN BERYL
In the manga, often seen on bended knee to the hovering black cloud that is the other-dimensional form of Queen Metallia.

TUXEDO MASK
Darien / Mamoru Chiba
Birthday: 3 August
Star Sign: Leo
Introduced in: Sailor Moon
Extra equipment/skills: Red roses, walking stick.
Mamoru's parents died in a tragic car accident, so as a result, he lives alone. He fights with the Sailors as Tuxedo Mask, to protect Sailor Moon from danger. In the future, Mamoru (now known as King Endymion) and Usagi (Neo Queen Serenity) begin the new Silver Millenium and build Crystal Tokyo, where everyone has eternal life.

SAILOR NEPTUNE
Michiru Kaiô
Birthday: 6 March
Star Sign: Pisces
Introduced: Sailor Moon S
Extra equipment/skills: Deep Aqua Mirror.
Neptune is elegant and cultured, and loves to play the violin. She is very quiet compared to her friend Sailor Uranus, but is also fiercely competitive, as well as a bit of a sore loser.

SAILOR PLUTO
Setsuna Meiô
Birthday: 29 October
Star Sign: Scorpio
Introduced in: Sailor Moon R
Extra equipment/skills: Time Staff (contains the Garnet Orb).
The oldest of the Sailors, Sailor Pluto is the guardian of time, and it is she who sends Rini/Chibi Usa back into the past.

SAILOR URANUS
Haruka Tenô
Birthday: 27 January
Star Sign: Aquarius
Introduced in: Sailor Moon S
Extra equipment/skills: Space Sword.
It is difficult to tell if the boyishly handsome Sailor Uranus is really male or female, due to the aspect of her associated planet, Uranus, which has no particular "gender" in Japanese. Uranus is an expert driver, both of cars and motorcycles. Her age is unknown, but she is very wealthy, and lives in a mansion with Sailor Neptune. She is looked up to by all of the Scouts, especially Jupiter, who idolizes the atheletic Uranus.



THE DARK MOON FAMILY
The "Four Sisters"—Catsy, Birdy, Avery and Prisma, plus Rubius— are actually subordinate to Prince Dimand (or "Diamond"), and a shadowy old man known as "Wiseman." After Rubius' defeat, Wiseman elects Esmeraude his successor. Sapphire tries to warn his brother Dimand of Wiseman's treachery, but he is killed to keep his mouth shut. An unsuspecting Dimand, who is in love with Sailor Moon, sacrifices himself to save her from Wiseman.

NEW RELEASE INFORMATION

TENCHI THE MOVIE -TENCHI MUYO IN LOVE-

SITCOM? SCI-FI? FANTASY? ROMANCE? YES!

Tenchi Muyo! Ryo-Ohki Theatrical Release!

Our favorite Galaxy Police detectives Mihoshi and Kiyone are on routine patrol near Earth when they are suddenly alerted to an emergency at Galaxy Police headquarters. HQ has been attacked and blown up by a notorious terrorist and fugitive named Kain, who possesses a power so strong he can even warp time and space.

At the same time on Earth Tenchi is fading! Thanks to Washu, he is saved but he and his friends see their house just disappear and they find themselves sitting in anold deserted ruin! When Washu figures out that the incident is due to something that happened to Tenchi's mother, Achika, years earlier, Tenchi and the gang (including the world's most cuddly spaceship, Ryo-Ohki) take a trip twenty six years into the past (courtesy of Washu's "Time Cause/Effect Controller"). Can Tenchi save Achika? And just what is that secret power she possesses?

State of the art THX AC3 Dolby Digital SurroundSound!
Music by Christopher Franke (formerly of Tangerine Dream), theme song sung by Nina Hagen and Rick Jude!

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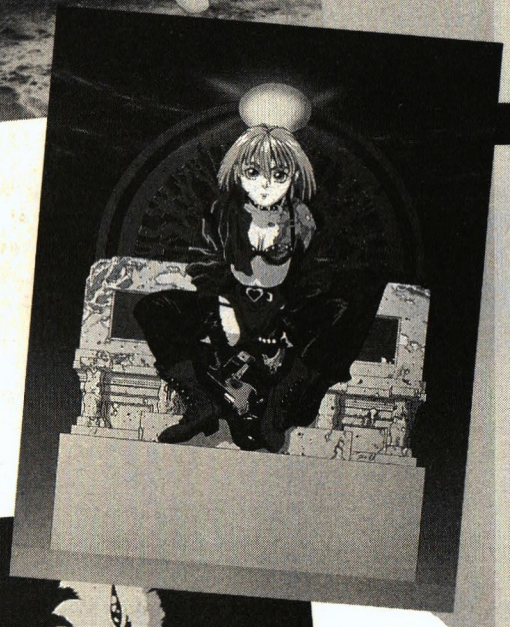
* VHS:	Subtitled - Deluxe inserts included. Dubbed - Closed Captioned.	
LD:	CAV, Two discs	$49.98
VHS-Dubbed:	95 min	$19.98
VHS-Subtitled:	95 min	$24.98



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Ani-Mayhem certainly lived up to its name at the summer cons! Ani-Mayhem is the first CCG designed for solitaire play as well as for play in a group setting. Features actual screen art from "Tenchi Muyo!", "El Hazard", "Ranma 1/2", and "Bubblegum Crisis". Artwork from other anime series to be added into the mix with future game expansions!

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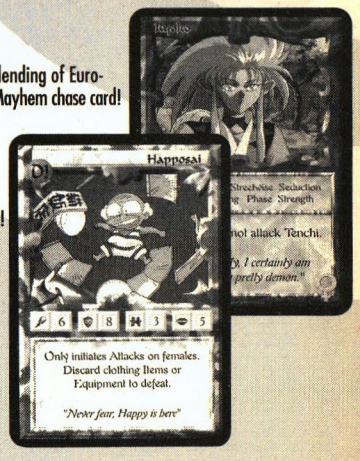

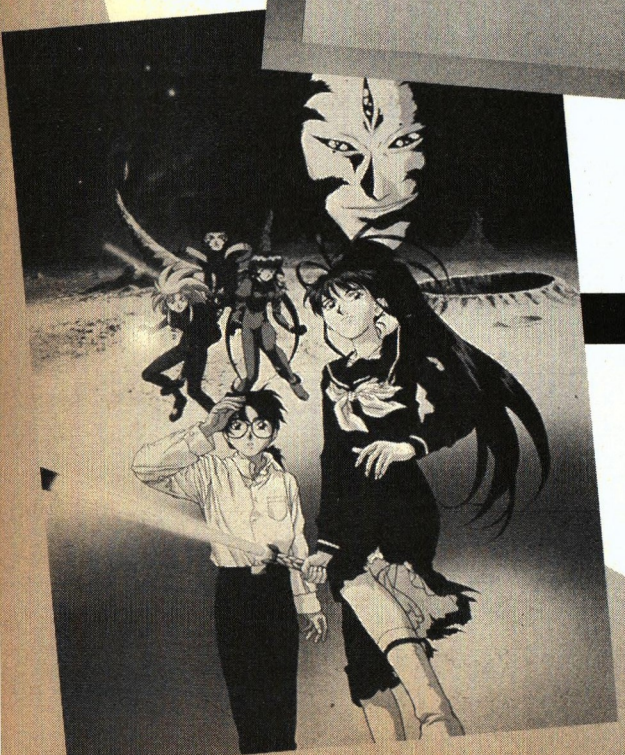

TENCHI MUYO! TV SERIES IS COMING IN OCTOBER!

The first volume of the long awaited Tenchi Muyo TV series will be released on October 29th and contain the following episodes:

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#2	No Need For Princess
#3	No Need For Worries
#4	No Need For A Goblin

Each new volume will contain either three or four episodes from the originaal 2 6 fun-filled half hour TV series!

Watch out for more information in the next issue of ANIMERICA!

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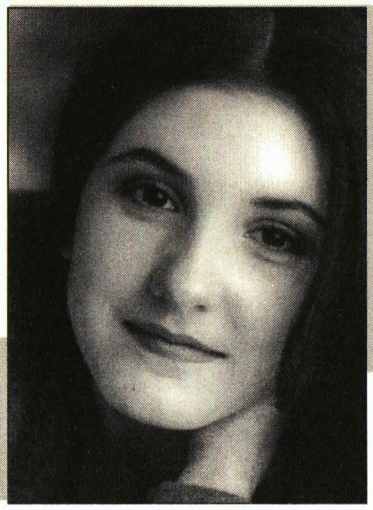
CATCH UP WITH POPULAR VOICE-ACTORS!

SOUND BITES

With more anime-in-English than ever before, the voice-actors for English versions of anime are becoming as popular in America as their Japanese counterparts are in Japan! ANIMERICA takes a look at the brightest stars of the domestic voice-acting industry.



Kelly Sheridan

vital statistics

Height: 5' 1"
Weight: 105 lbs.
Hair Color: Brown
Eye Color: Brown
Interests/Skills: Singing, reads music, plays keyboard, some French, swimming, skiing (powder), ice-skating, ballroom dancing, *Wen Li Do* (women's self defense)

Fan Mail for Kelly Sheridan can be sent to:
Tarlington Talent Inc. • Suite 609, 525 Seymour Street • Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 3H7

Interviewer: Toshifumi Yoshida

RANMA 1/2's "spatula-swinging ninja girl," Ukyo Kuonji

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How did you get started in voice-acting?
Well, um, when I was quite young I got an agent, and she sent me up for a few voice-acting roles and I landed one. It was called ***CAPTAIN ZED***, and I was a little girl who turned into a princess one night. So, that was my first role.

Before you go in for a session, do you do anything special to prepare yourself for a role?
I do a few excercises…I don't know, just sort of hum a bit…say some tongue twisters, but that's about it.

When doing a character that's been translated from another language—in this case, Japanese—do you ever want to hear the Japanese, to see how that voice-actor handled the part?
Sometimes. Sometimes it helps. Sometimes you *need* to see it, otherwise you have *no* idea what's going on.

Do you think there's room for improvisation in your voice-acting roles?
Improvisation? Sometimes…I don't know.

Or do you like to stick to the script?
Yeah, usually [LAUGHS] because I don't think I'm that imaginative, and I can't think of that stuff on the spot.

Do you ever watch the animation you are in?
Yes, I like to, when it's possible.

Did you watch animation before you got into voice-acting?
Oh, yeah. I was a big cartoon buff when I was little. Even now. [LAUGHS]

When you go out for casting calls, what kind of characters do you usually try for?
Usually they want to hear me read for the sort of smart-aleck girl role, your typical teen.

Does it suit your lifestyle?
Yes. [LAUGHS] Yeah, yeah that's me. [LAUGHS]

Of all the characters that you've ever played…didn't you have a voice on MY LITTLE PONY?
Yes, I think that was my favorite. I was Melody.

Was that the main character?
Well, no. There were six ponies and they were all sort of friends.

Was that your favorite?
Yes, I'd say so.

Of all your roles, what's the strangest role you've ever played?
I think that would be right up there with the strangest too… a talking pony? Actually, I was a cat, too, so that's kind of weird, and in ***RANMA*** I'm a ninja—a spatula-swinging girl—so that's kind of odd, too, I guess.

Do you do any live-action work?
Once in a while, yep.

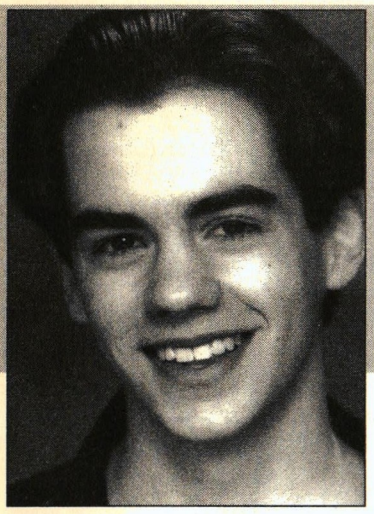
Anything we might have seen?
I was on an episode of ***SLIDERS*** once and a couple of TV movies. Nothing big.

How would you say voice-acting compares with live-action work?
I think I like voice-acting *more*… it's faster and it's more *fun*, you can be anything, or anyone you want, if you want to.

Do you get fan mail?
No. [LAUGHS]

[LAUGHS] Do you want fan mail?
Uh…sure!

Well, do you have any closing message, or any advice for people wanting to get into voice-acting?
Well, for those of you that want to get into voice-acting and haven't got any experience, just when you go into audition just go for all you've got, 'cause they want it *BIG*. That's about it, I guess. ☆



Brad Swaile

vital statistics

Height: 5' 7"
Weight: 120 lbs.
Hair Color: Brown
Eye Color: Brown
Interests/Skills: Singing, reads music, plays drums and guitar, swimming, skiing (cross country and powder), horseback riding (Western), skating (ice and roller), baseball, football, hockey, sailing, tennis, billiards, bowling, basketball, soccer, hacky sack.
Previous Roles: (Live-action): ***THE ODYSSEY***, ***TELL A TALE TOWN*** **(Animation)**: "Ace," ***MY LITTLE PONY TALES***; "Mousse," ***RANMA 1/2***; ***DOUBLE DRAGON, SONIC THE HEDGEHOG***

Interviewer: Toshifumi Yoshida

Brad, how did you get into voice-acting?
It all started with theater in elementary school, and high school, and things like that...eventually I got involved with a place called the Vancouver Youth Theatre, and through them I got involved with the Tarlington Talent Agency, who started sending me out on auditions and things, and it just so happened that I started going on voice-over auditions. Mu first break in voice-over roles was in ***MY LITTLE PONY***....

Who did you play?
In ***MY LITTLE PONY TALES*** I was "Ace"... I was the *mean* pony. And from there...I don't know, it was just such fun that I worked on a couple of other ones, just as I was going along.

Do you do anything special to prepare yourself for a role? Like warm-ups?
For warm ups, I just try to relax, as I'm saying certain lines...especially if I'm quacking as in ***RANMA 1/2***. [LAUGHS] I just try to think the dialogue that I would be saying, and just try to quack the lines in keeping with the duck character. But basically, I just relax.

When doing a character translated from the Japanese like this one, do you like to hear the Japanese, to see how that voice-actor handled the part, or do you like to go on your own?
I'd rather tackle it on my own, give it a shot of some originality from myself, put some of myself into the role.

So you consider there's room for improvisation in your roles.
I think so.

Do you ever watch the animation you are in?
I haven't really had too much available to me, but anytime I can, yes, I do. I taped all the ***MY LITTLE PONY TALES***. [LAUGHS]

MY LITTLE PONY TALES? I thought it was just called MY LITTLE PONY.
Well, this was the sequel series. There was the one back in 1986—I think it was through Hasbro—and this was the remake. It was actually done through Sunbow Productions here at Ocean Studios. And so that was on Saturday mornings, and I got up early and taped it.

You watched animation before you started acting, right?
Oh, yeah.

The Saturday morning stuff.
Ooohhh, yeah.

Do you have a "type" of character that you're usually cast for?
Usually your typical pre-teen or teenager...average, boy-from-a-troubled-family-kind of character. Either that, or the hero role.

Do you have a favorite character that you've played?
I'd say it'd have to be "Ace" from ***MY LITTLE PONY***. Because all the other ponies were so proper, and so straight-laced, and it was nice to have one pony that would give them a little nudge once and awhile.

What would you say is the strangest role you've ever played as a voice-actor?
That would have to be the duck.

[LAUGHS] Do you also do live-action work?
Yes, yes I do. There's a CBC series called ***THE ODYSSEY***—in the first season of that I was "Commader Scud of the Liberators." We hiked up to Seymour and shot these big army-type scenes. Other than that, mainly government videos and things like that. Nothing like ***THE X-FILES*** yet.

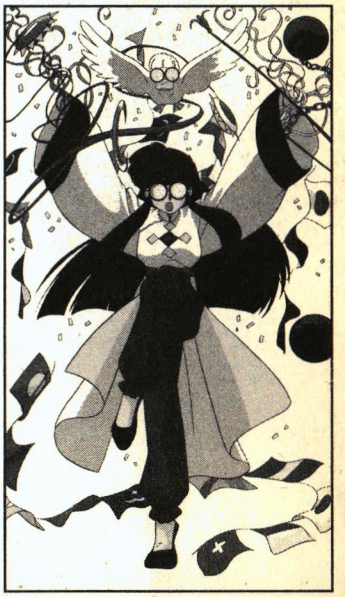
How would you say voice-acting compares to live-action work?
I feel a lot more comfortable doing voice-acting, because I don't have to worry about what I'm looking like when I'm doing this. It seems that a major importance of being a film or TV actor is how you look, and it's nice to find a certain kind of job that doesn't rely on how you look to get the role.

Do you get fan mail?
Do I get fan mail? [LAUGHS] Not from film and TV-type stuff, but back when I was doing theater. I did some theater that toured elementary schools throughout Canada and different places...I actually did some things in Japan at one point, I did some theater back there. So I have gotten some pretty interesting fan letters. [LAUGHS]

From girls?
Oh yeah. When you hit the elementary school scene...it tends to happen. [LAUGHS]

Do you have any closing message for the fans who are watching animation, or any words of advice to people who want to get into voice-acting?
For the people who are watching animation, just enjoy it while you can. It was a big part of my childhood, and it seems like there's less emphasis on it now as I'm growing up—but try and keep it a big part, because it's fun and it's great. For those trying to break into it, just keep working on it, I guess. Things may not happen right away, so just stick to it until they do. ☆

DOUBLE TALK
Not only does Brad do the voice of "Mousse," but the duck as well! Quack!



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Fan Mail for Brad Swaile can be sent to: ***Tarlington Talent Inc. • Suite 609, 525 Seymour Street • Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 3H7***

NEXT TIME: ***SAILOR MOON****'s "Tuxedo Mask"!*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

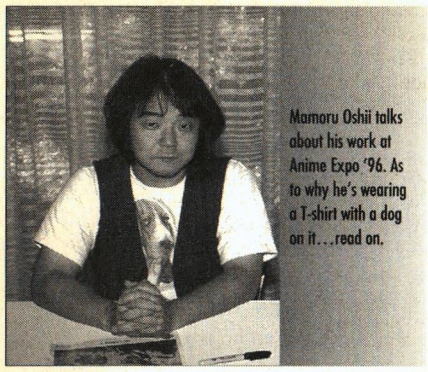
live-action role-playing games throughout the hotel such as ***Rage*** and ***Vampire the Masquerade***. Yours truly tried to play ***Vampire***, but was slaughtered in the first fifteen minutes. (Thank you Miss Vamp with the bad attitude!) All this, and two days to go....

Saturday
"Embrace the Darkness"
The day started out cloudy, and con-goers went about their business as usual. Some attended the dealers' room while others attended panels or **Steve Bennett**'s world-famous cel painting class. A vicious thunderstorm rampaged through the area. At approximately 11:34 a.m., a major power outage left utter confusion, total chaos, dogs and cats living together...mass hysteria! Everything halted. The dealers' room closed and most of the con activities shut down. However, this crisis did not slow the con staff while they rushed to make sure that all the needs of the attendees were taken care of. As a result, attending otaku spirits were barely dampened. The hallways were cluttered with people talking and playing Magic. Con special guests **Ben Dunn**, **Fred Perry** and **Frank Conniff** (the One-and-Only **"TV's Frank"**) continued to sweat out the autographs to adoring, although sweating fans, while the Viz panel, presided over by **Trish Ledoux** and **Toshifumi Yoshida**, continued sans lighting for another good half-hour. Intrepid A.D. Vision quickly set up a mobile generator in their van in the parking lot and kept the VCR fires burning. Others flocked to the party at the pool or retreated back to their rooms and chilled out while the storm quieted. Native Texan attendees were quick to offer a tour of Dallas, while others looked for fake blood for their costumes. Bus-loads of people viewed ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** at the big screen near the Prestonwood Mall. The power remained out for the next eight hours until...at last! Let there be light! And the light was returned to us at 7:30 p.m. and the light was good. Then, it was business as usual.

Saturday Night
"Showdown at the Masquerade"
While waiting for the judges' results at the masquerade, the audience was entertained by the winners of the "Pass the Dragon Ball" contest. Seven Dragon Balls were passed out at the opening ceremonies, and whoever was still in possession of the Dragon Balls by the time of the masquerade would either receive a prize or a pie in the face. Four lucky recipients were spared the smiting and received prizes, while three were not so lucky (including yours truly—"Doc," that is) and were rewarded with pies. Then, with a quick "Moon Prism Power Make-Up!" the auditorium transformed into a dance floor, decorated with a wide array of colorful lights. Pulsating music filled the air. A most unique Saturday came to a close.

Sunday
"So long, and thanks for all the anime"
Sunday marked the last of the activities for A-Kon. The day began with a star-filled banquet in which con attendees could enjoy a Sunday brunch with the guests. There we were also treated to a presentation of the winning entries to the video contest. "Best Technical" went to a lively compilation of anime's most violent moments set to the tune of "Bullet in Your Head." The overall winner was a video of ***PROJECT A-KO*** set to the song "Keep Them Separated" by Offspring, plus the winners of the art and modeling contests were announced. But alas, time was a predator and it soon caught up with us. The con ended with fond farewells and memories of the past two days. Hearty thanks and Bravo Zulu to all of the con staff who worked hard to bring this con together. Not even a natural disaster could make the staff lose control. **Joe Chance**, on con security, had this to say: "I was pleased we were able to take a disaster and bring it to our advantage." Till Next Year, TruBelievers!

NEXT TIME: ANIME EXPO! • SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON! • VOICE-ACTORS SOUND OFF! • MORE COSTUMES! • MORE CREATORS! • MORE FUN! ☆



Mamoru Oshii talks about his work at Anime Expo '96. As to why he's wearing a T-shirt with a dog on it…read on.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

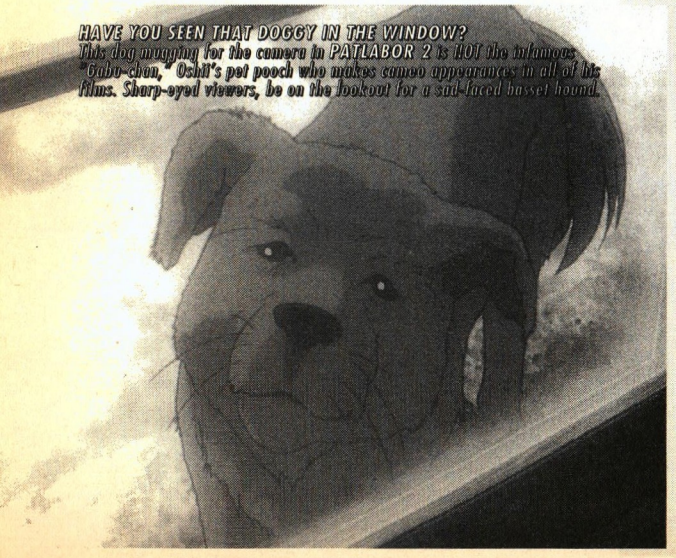
VIRTUAL PANEL! *MEET MAMORU OSHII*

Sound bites from the director of ***URUSEI YATSURA: BEAUTIFUL DREAMER****, both* ***PATLABOR*** *movies and the cyber-fantasy* ***GHOST IN THE SHELL****, as he came out to meet his fans for the first time ever at* ***Anime Expo '96****.*

How he got started in animation
"When I was 26," says Mamoru Oshii, "I was out of work, just walking the streets, when I bumped into a telephone pole and saw an ad, 'animators wanted.'"

On *GHOST IN THE SHELL*'s popularity
"I had no idea that ***GHOST*** was so popular in the United States—it feels a little strange."

On working with Manga Entertainment (as co-producers of *GHOST IN THE SHELL*)
"I don't know what other Western producers are like, but the Manga people were gentlemanly and courteous; the thing that was different about them is that they were always with me during production. Manga was better than most Japanese producers, who are just plain weird."



HAVE YOU SEEN THAT DOGGY IN THE WINDOW? This dog mugging for the camera in PATLABOR 2 is NOT the infamous "Gabu-chan," Oshii's pet pooch who makes cameo appearances in all of his films. Sharp-eyed viewers, be on the lookout for a sad-faced basset hound.

On his favorite directors
"I don't really have a favorite director," says Oshii—"if you force me to answer, I'll say it's myself. I don't get out to the movie theaters much—in the past five years, I've been maybe three times. Most of the films I see are on video." Oshii also mentions that he doesn't watch other anime, and that he's not particularly impressed by being praised by James Cameron.

On the trend of Hollywood "borrowing" from anime
"I haven't talked to Cameron about it, but if so, it's okay," says Oshii. As for "stealing" from foreign films, Oshii notes that if Hollywood has been ripping off anime as some fans have charged, "then we've just about evened the score," as anime has certainly swiped right and left from Hollywood over the years.
"Don't we all steal?" piped in fellow panelist Toshihiko Nishikubo, ***GHOST***'s animation director. Oshii looks at it this way: "If you do it well, that's for the better, but if you make a bad imitation, that just sucks."

On the future of computer animation
"***GHOST*** would have cost ten times as much to make in live-action," Oshii notes. With prices for computer graphics coming down, "the days of CG being a novelty are fast coming to an end. I've always thought that CG is not unlike anime, although my idea is how to use it in any particular scene, not to replace conventional animation per se. Although even in a Japanese CG movie, you may note that half of it may simply be drawn to look like CG."

On directing live-action, as compared to anime
"Coming up with a theme isn't difficult for me," replies Oshii, "since everything I make has the same theme. When you see my finished works, they may look different. But when I work on them, they all seem the same. I might find it easier to make people laugh, but as I get older, I find I prefer serious stories." Oshii says that his experience on ***URUSEI YATSURA*** over three years was "tough," and that it was "not an amicable parting," so that being able to express himself fully in his last ***URUSEI YATSURA*** work, 1984's ***BEAUTIFUL DREAMER***, was cathartic. He also plans to return to working in live-action again in the near future.

On the Bible
"I'm not a Christian, but I've been reading the Bible since my student days. These are used as the prototype for the stories; not for religious reasons, but for ideology and literary inspiration." As for his 1985 OAV, ***ANGEL'S EGG***, which also uses Christian symbolism, he says, "I don't really think you can explain it. It's a story that begins when the sun sets, and ends with the sun rising"—an oblique way, perhaps, of acknowledging it as a dream—"I kind of started it without really understanding it, and I'm still not sure I understand it."

On his use of fish-eye and bird's-eye perspective
"I get asked about that a lot. I'm not really sure about the meaning of that, either. If you pressed me, you could say these are 'eyes' that look at the world of the film from the outside—that these are the eyes, in fact, of the audience."

SEEING THE WORLD IN A NEW WAY One of Oshii's famous "fish-eye lens" shots from PATLABOR 2

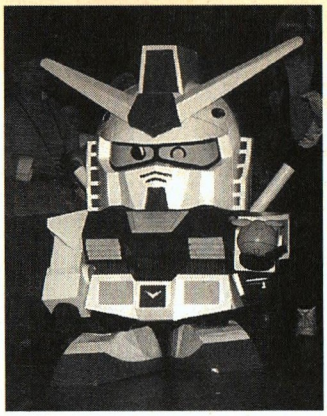
On *GHOST IN THE SHELL*
"The most difficult thing in making ***GHOST***," says Oshii, "was how not to offend the original author."

On the possibility of a third *PATLABOR* movie
"…indeed a possibility" by the end of 1997 or beginning of 1998. However, likely to be directed by Headgear mecha designer Yutaka Izubuchi.

On his own next anime directorial effort
"By next summer it will be obvious."

On Oshii's dog Gabriel (or "Gabu-chan")
"She's not a beagle, as one magazine reported," says Oshii, who thought about day-tripping during the Expo to see a dog show, "She's a basset hound. I don't like beagles. My other dog is a loose mongrel, Gabriel's boyfriend. I adopted him. I've also got one cat." In answer to the question of "What film would you make if someone handed you a big bag of money?" Oshii muses, "I wish I could meet somebody like that. I'd probably make a movie about basset hounds."

On American fans (as opposed to Japanese fans)
"[They're] not much different—both groups show a notable lack of females, and both seem to be the 'logic-oriented' type." ☆



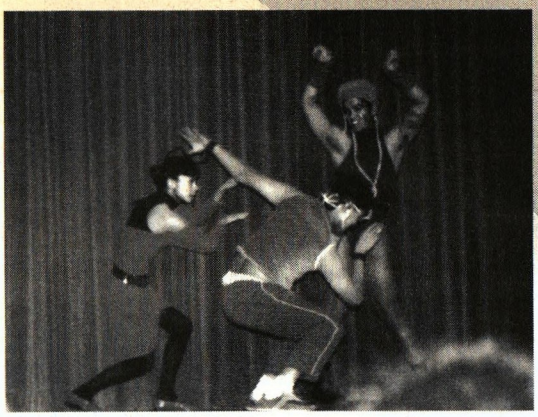


Photo by Jeff Okamoto

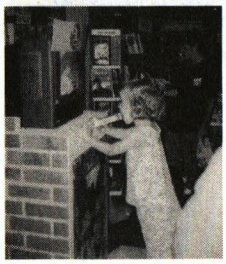


Photo by Widya Santoso

TOP TEN THINGS TO DO WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT AT A-KON

10 .....Play ***Magic...IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WALKWAY!!!***
9.....While getting autographs from **Ben Dunn** and **Fred Perry**, see how many pockets you can pick.
8.....Electronic room locks are out of order too...use your imagination.
7.....New live-action role-playing game: ***Vampire the Masquerade Marco-Polo***.
6.....Roam the hotel aimlessly from end to end hoping that the friction from your shoes and the carpet will build up enough static electricity to run the air conditioner!
5.....Sacrifice a virgin (or a fanboy) to the God of Wattage.
4.....See how many people you can punish in the name of the moon.
3.....See how many people *ENJOY* being punished in the name of the moon.
2.....Run around with several buckets of water to see how many people have visited Jusenkyo.
1.....Torture a T-U Electric Employee!! (Texas Utility—we suppose it's not their fault, however....)

Contributed by Scully, Doc and "The Dread Pirate" Crystal

TOP TEN PICK-UP LINES AT A-KON 7

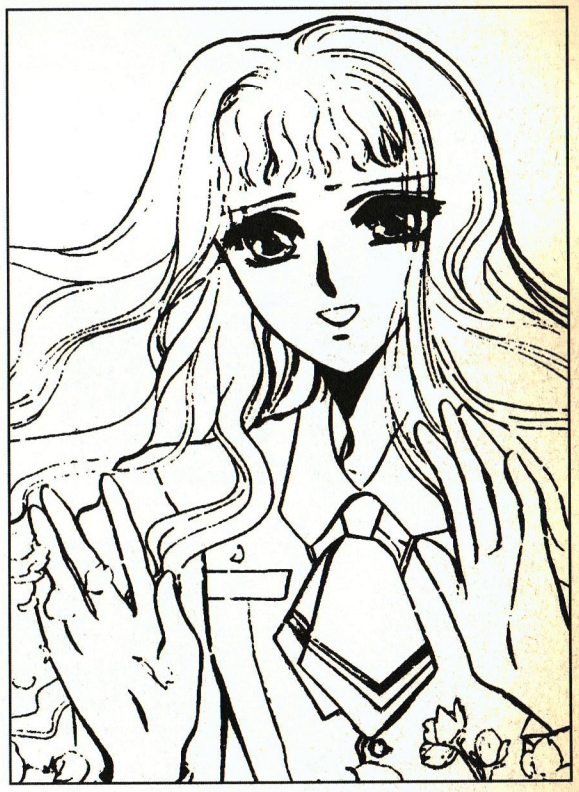
10 .....Who needs animation...you've got the best dirty pair!
9.....On behalf of the moon, will you punish me?
8.....I work for ANIMERICA.
7.....Wanna lick this pie off my face?
6.....I'll pay you.
5.....You look like Dana Scully! Let's make our own X-File!
4.....You know, patty cake is anime sex!
3.....I'm a staff head.
2.....Hey, wanna see what happens when you throw hot water on me?
1.....Hey, wanna see my Dragon Balls?

Crystal and Amy and (via telephone) Pablo "Doc" ☆

a mysterious young man...
a beautiful young girl...
strange psychic powers...
and visions of awesome destruction....

X/1999

"PRELUDE"



The Beginning of the End is coming this July

VIZ COMICS™

X/1999, "Prelude"
story and art by Clamp
184 B&W pages
$15.95 USA/$21.50 CAN

THEIR DESTINY WAS FOREORDAINED

X/1999

THE STORY THUS FAR

The End of the World is approaching....

Princess Hinoto is a psychic—and she has seen a terrrible end for all humanity, coming very soon. At the nexus of her visions is a mysterious young man named **Kamui Shiro**, who has suddenly reappeared in Tokyo after a six-year absence. His arrival has started in motion a sequence of terrible events, as other psychics and seers across the nation read the signs and wait for the coming apocalypse.

Although Hinoto's latest vision both reveals more and deepens the mystery surrounding the enigmatic Kamui, she isn't the only one to be experiencing visions...and some of those seers have *very* different agendas. Maybe even dangerous ones....

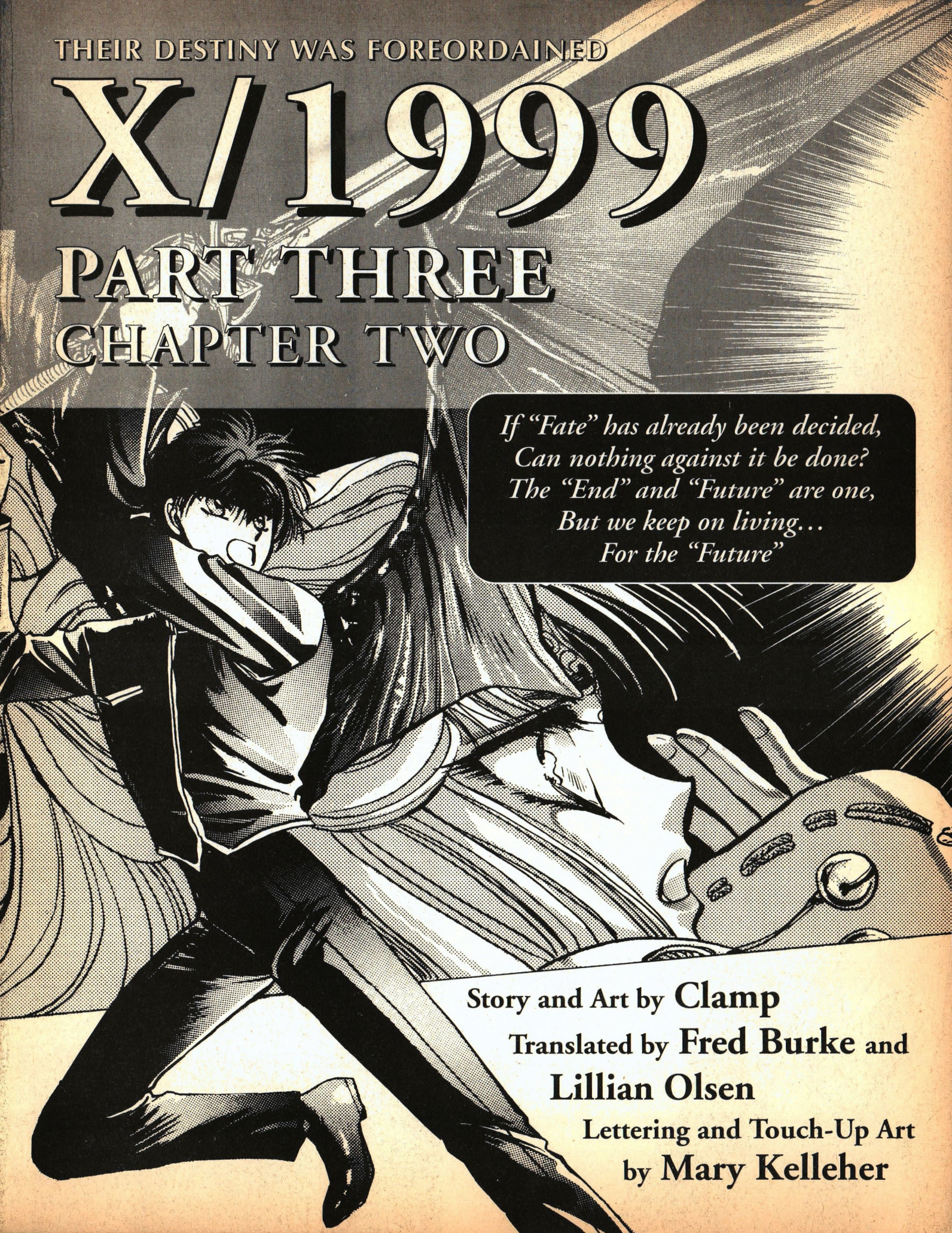
As the mysterious **Kanoe** and her allies attempt to solve the mystery of Kamui's sacred sword, stolen by an unknown power, a young priest tries to inform Kamui of his duty and destiny....

THEIR DESTINY WAS FOREORDAINED

X/1999

PART THREE

CHAPTER TWO



Story and Art by **Clamp**

Translated by **Fred Burke** and **Lillian Olsen**

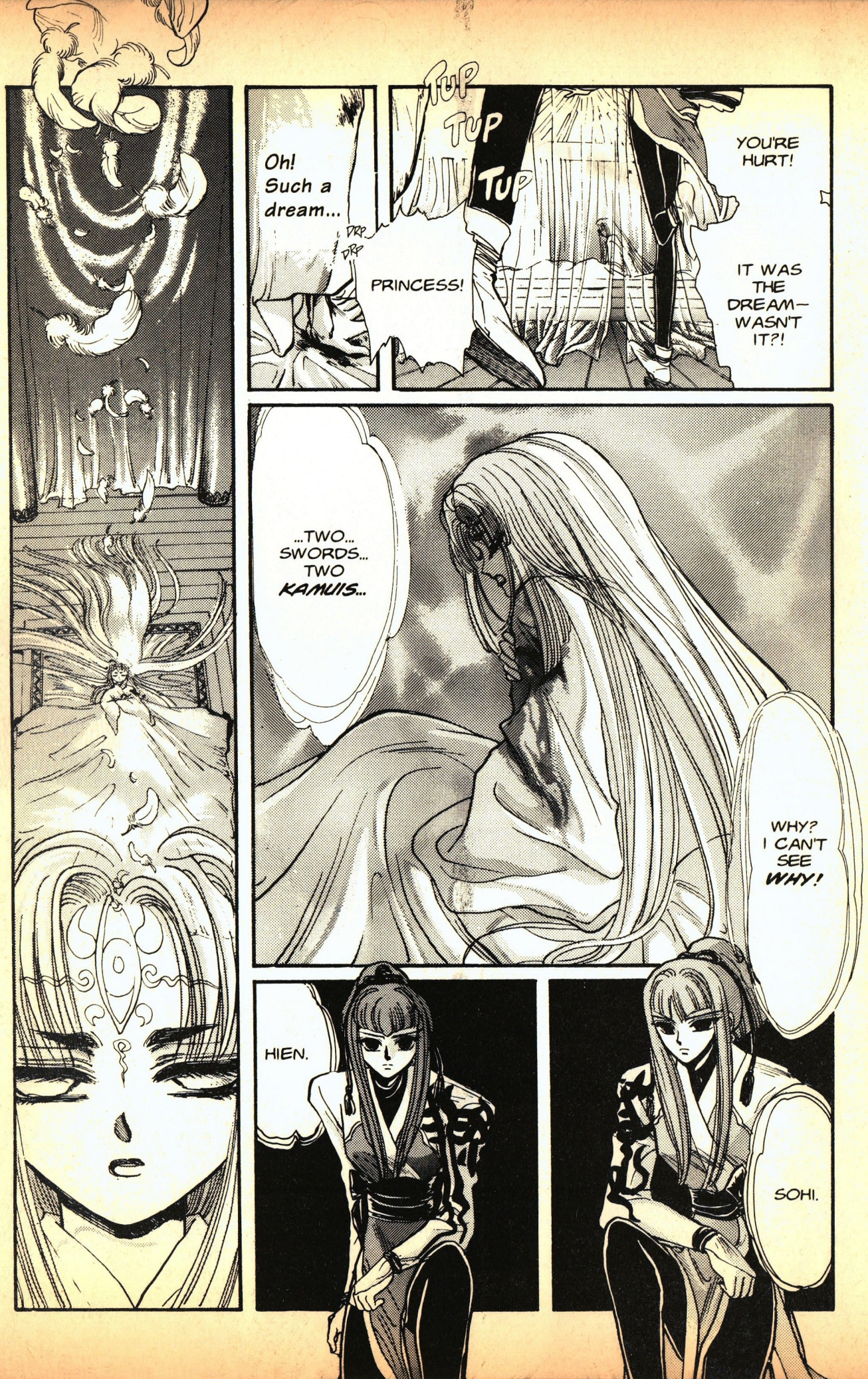
Lettering and Touch-Up Art by **Mary Kelleher**

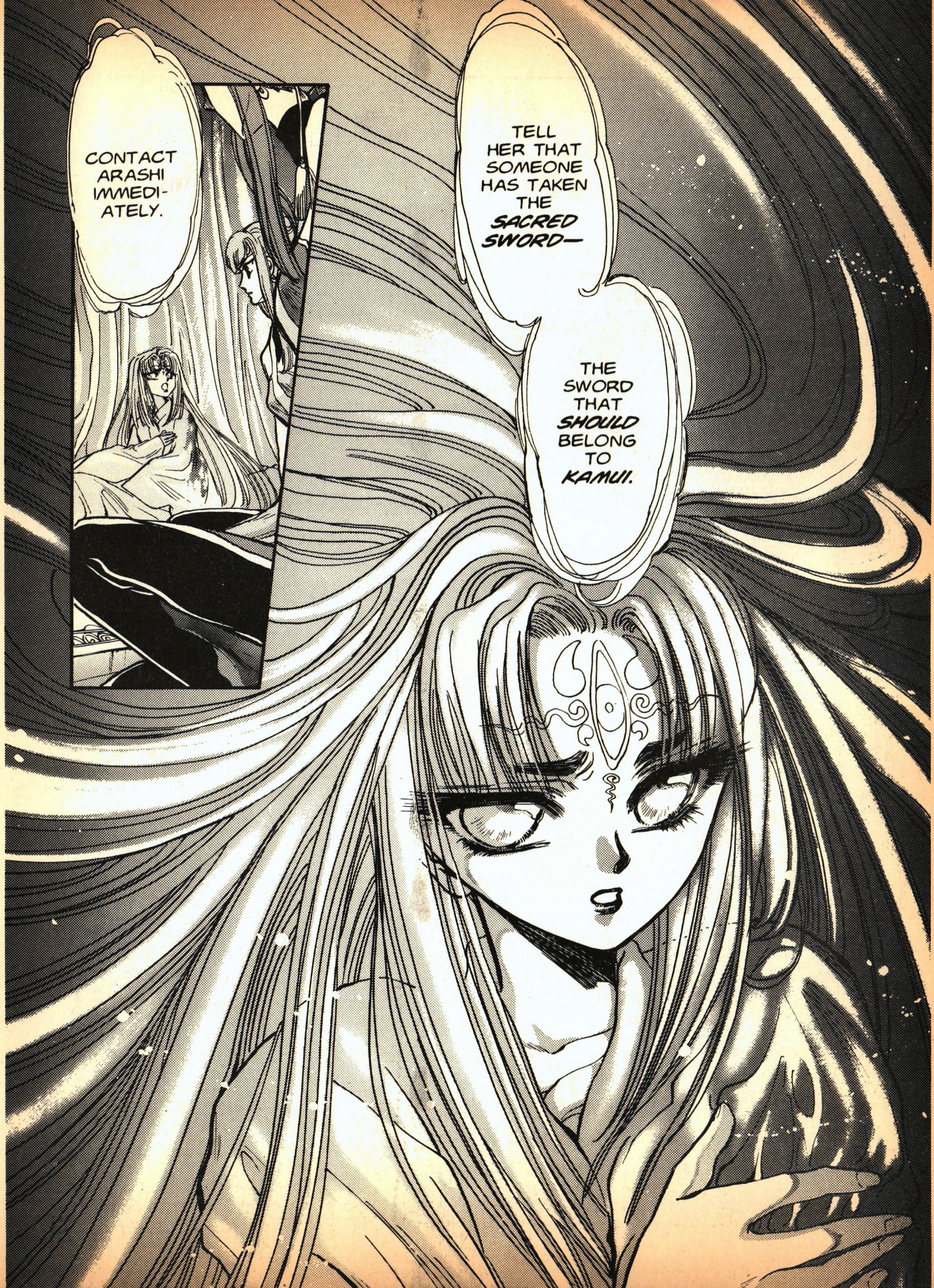
THNG
TWUP

KA-KLANG

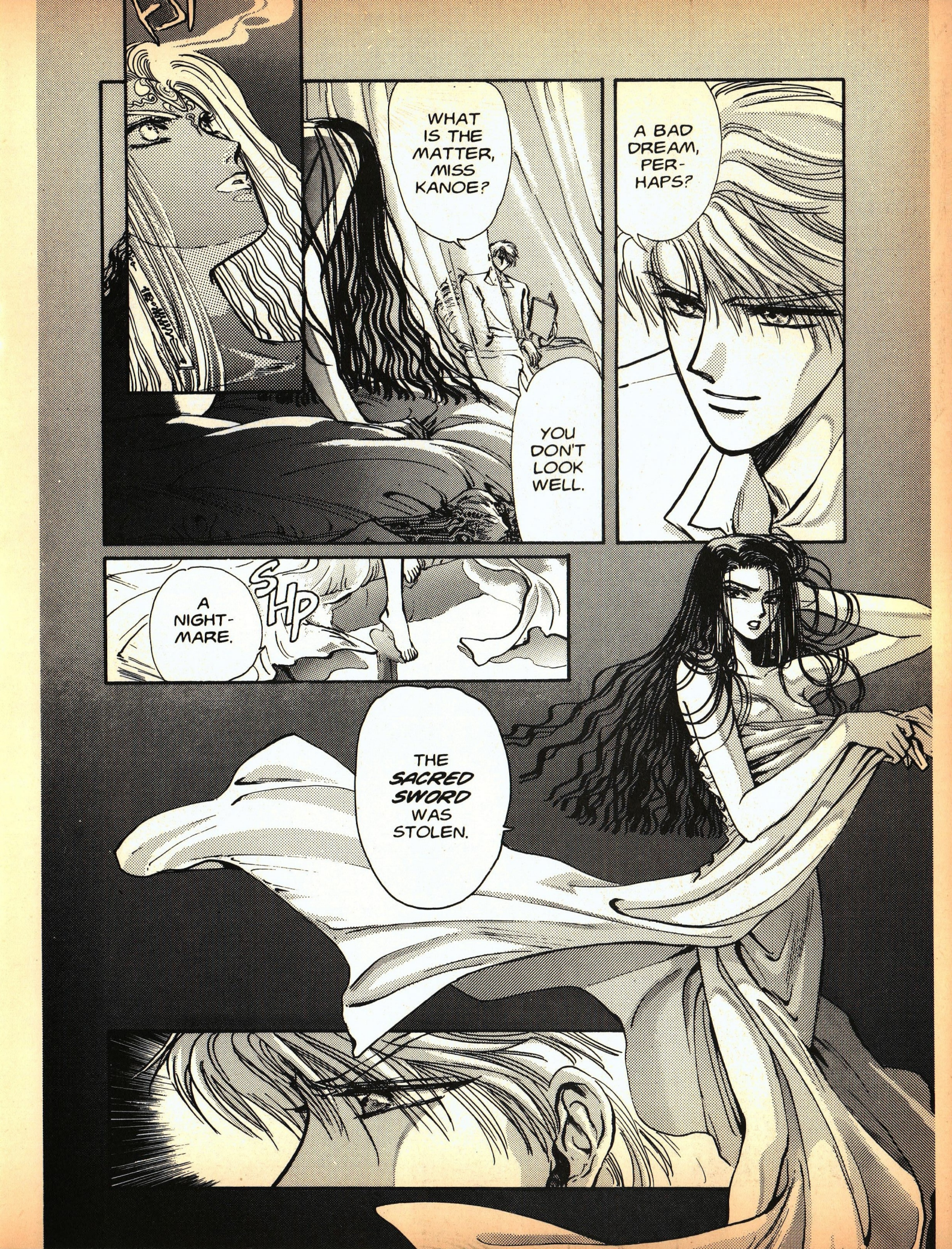
FFSSSST
AAAAHHH!

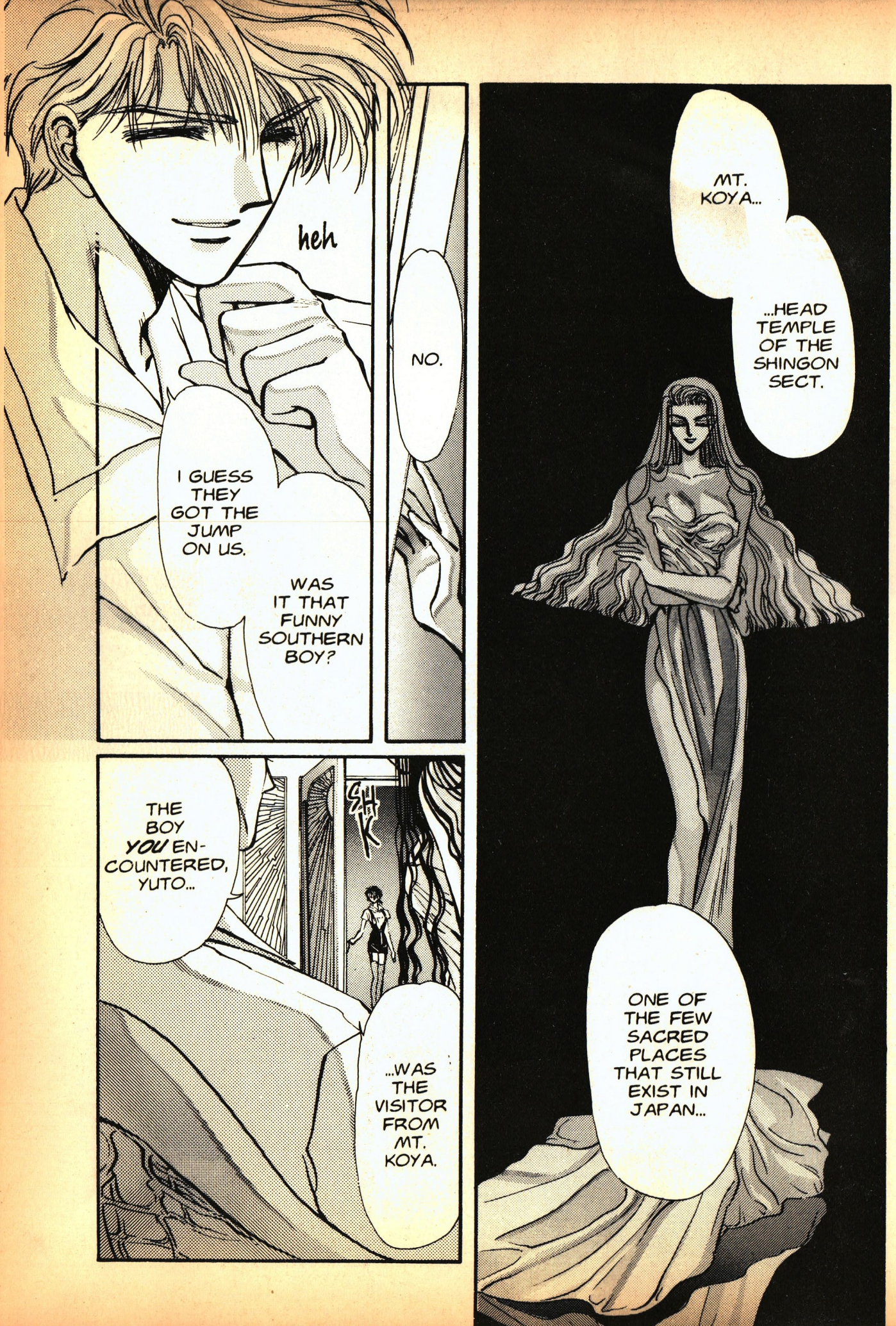
KAMUI
...
THEY
—THEY
ARE
GONE...

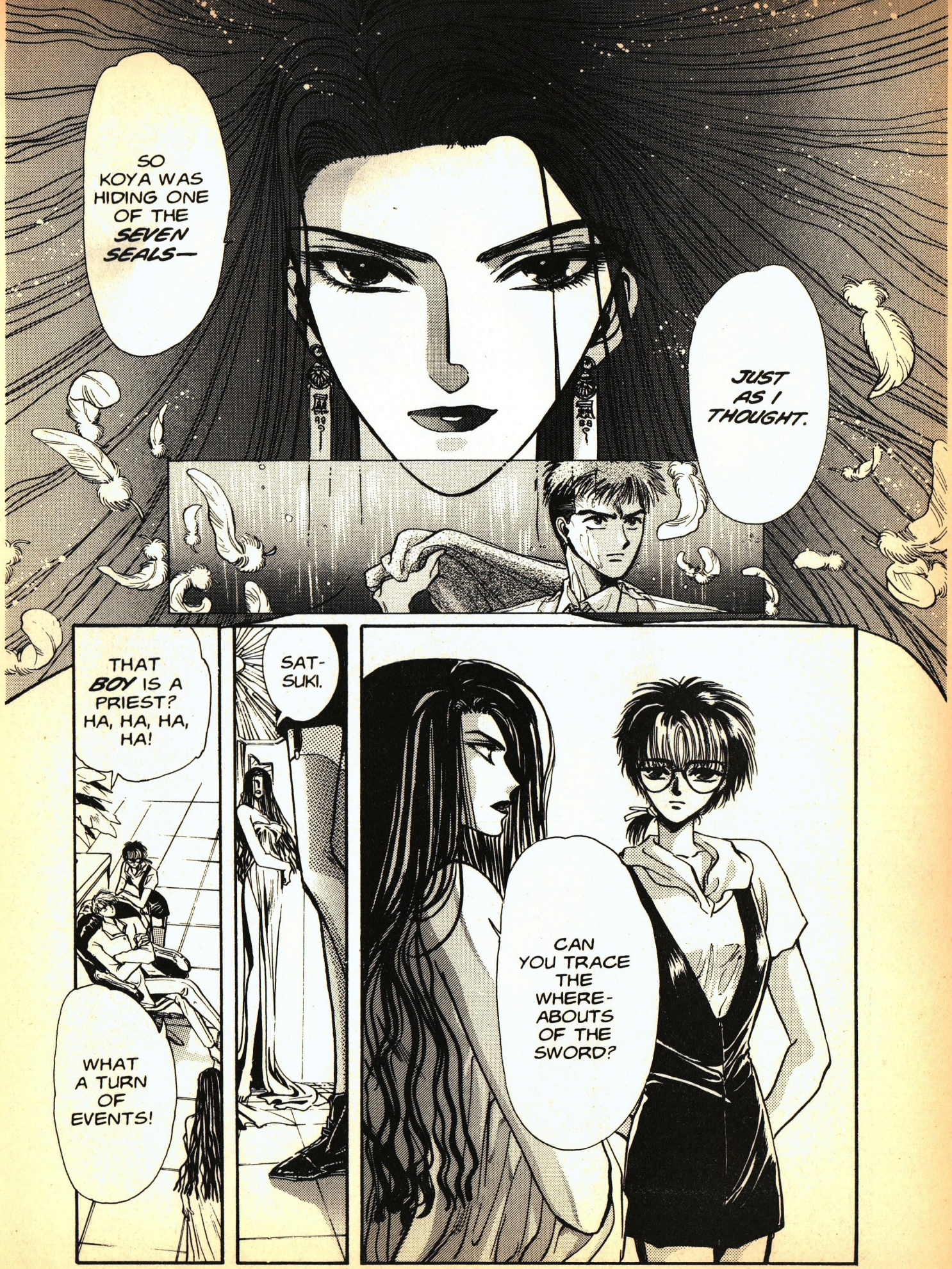

Oh! Such a dream...
DRP DRP
PRINCESS!
TUP TUP TUP
YOU'RE HURT!
IT WAS THE DREAM— WASN'T IT?!
...TWO... SWORDS... TWO KAMUIS...
WHY? I CAN'T SEE WHY!
HIEN.
SOHI.

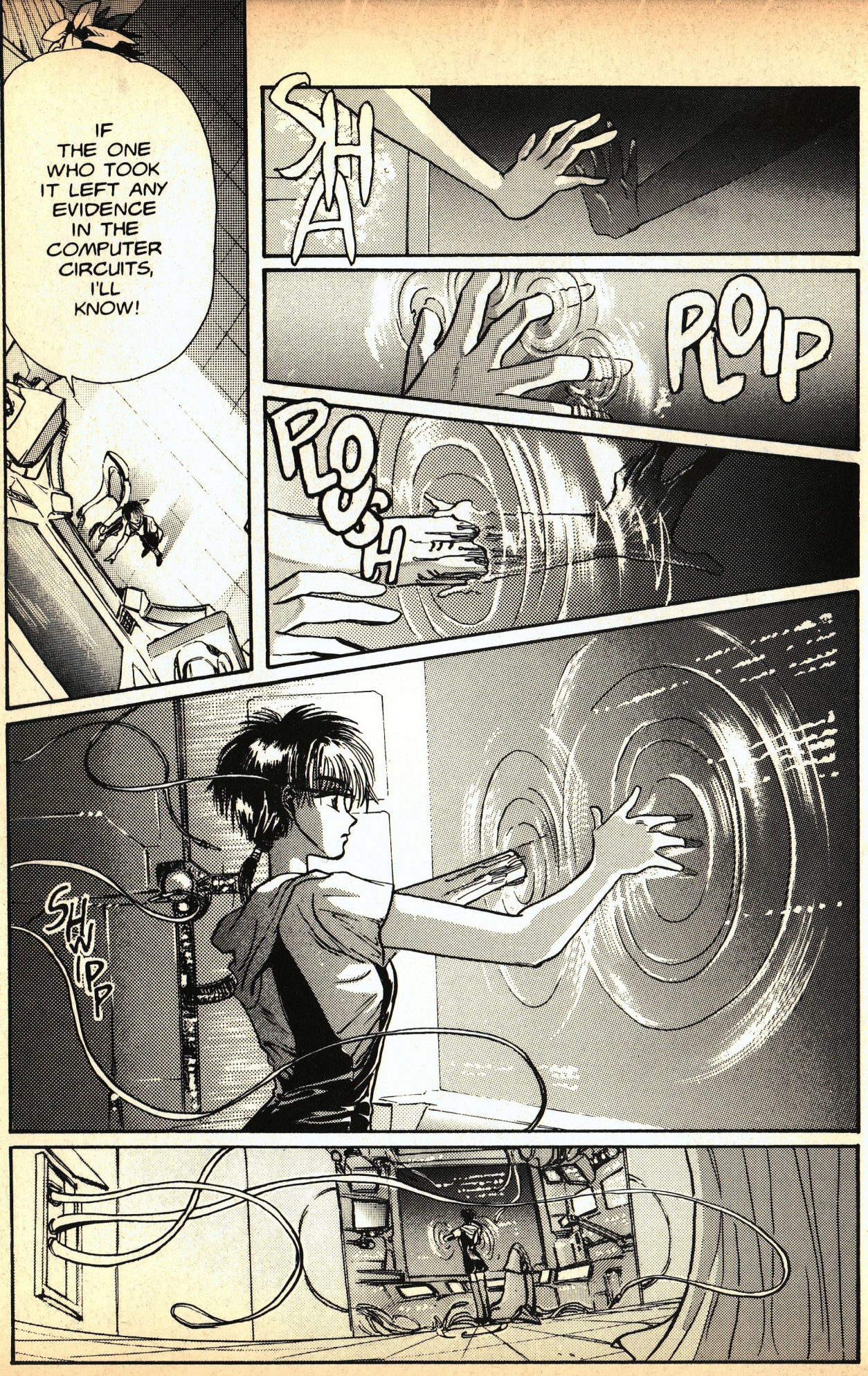

CONTACT ARASHI IMMEDI-ATELY.
TELL HER THAT SOMEONE HAS TAKEN THE SACRED SWORD—
THE SWORD THAT SHOULD BELONG TO KAMUI.

PHOOF

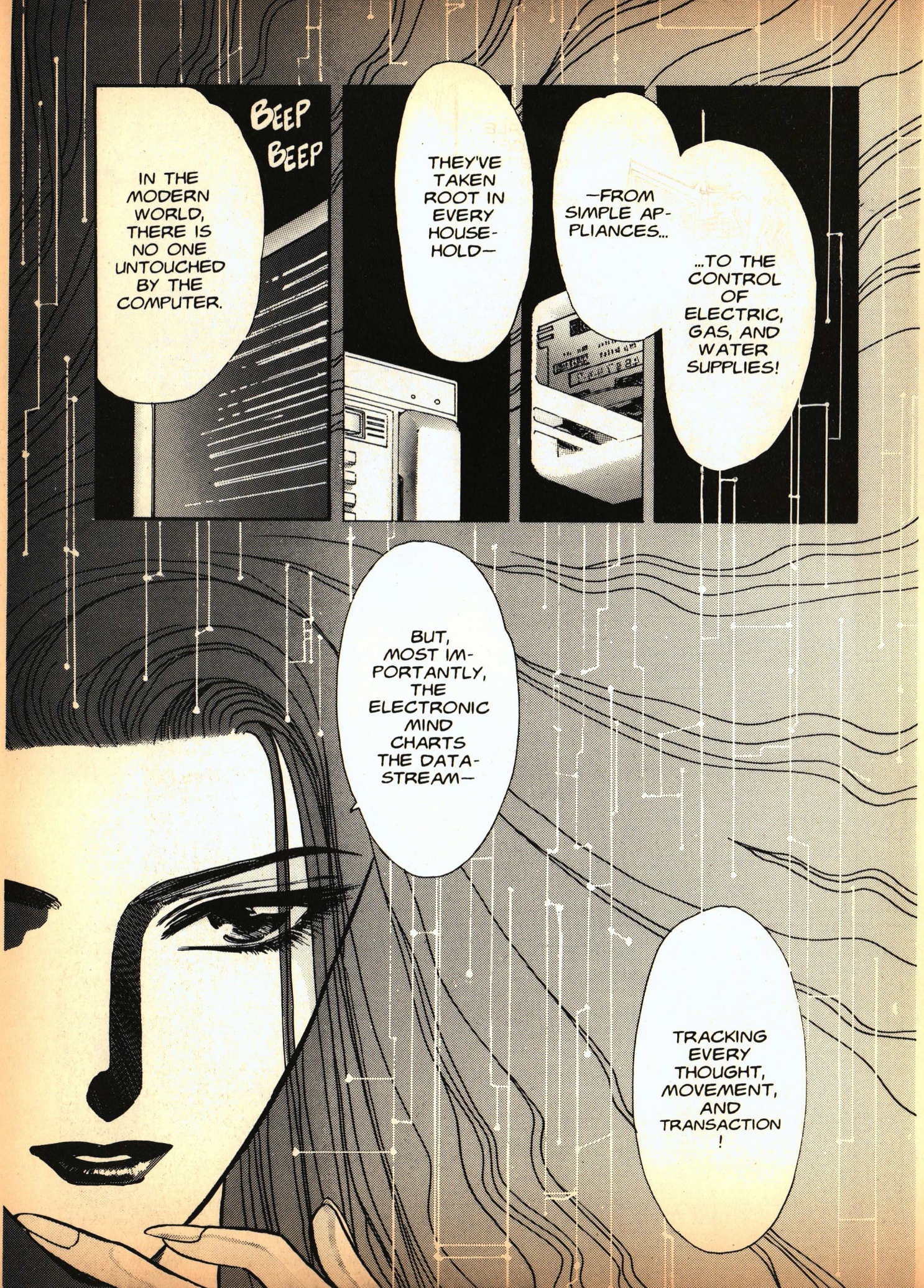

A BAD DREAM, PERHAPS?
WHAT IS THE MATTER, MISS KANOE?
YOU DON'T LOOK WELL.
SHP
A NIGHTMARE.
THE SACRED SWORD WAS STOLEN.

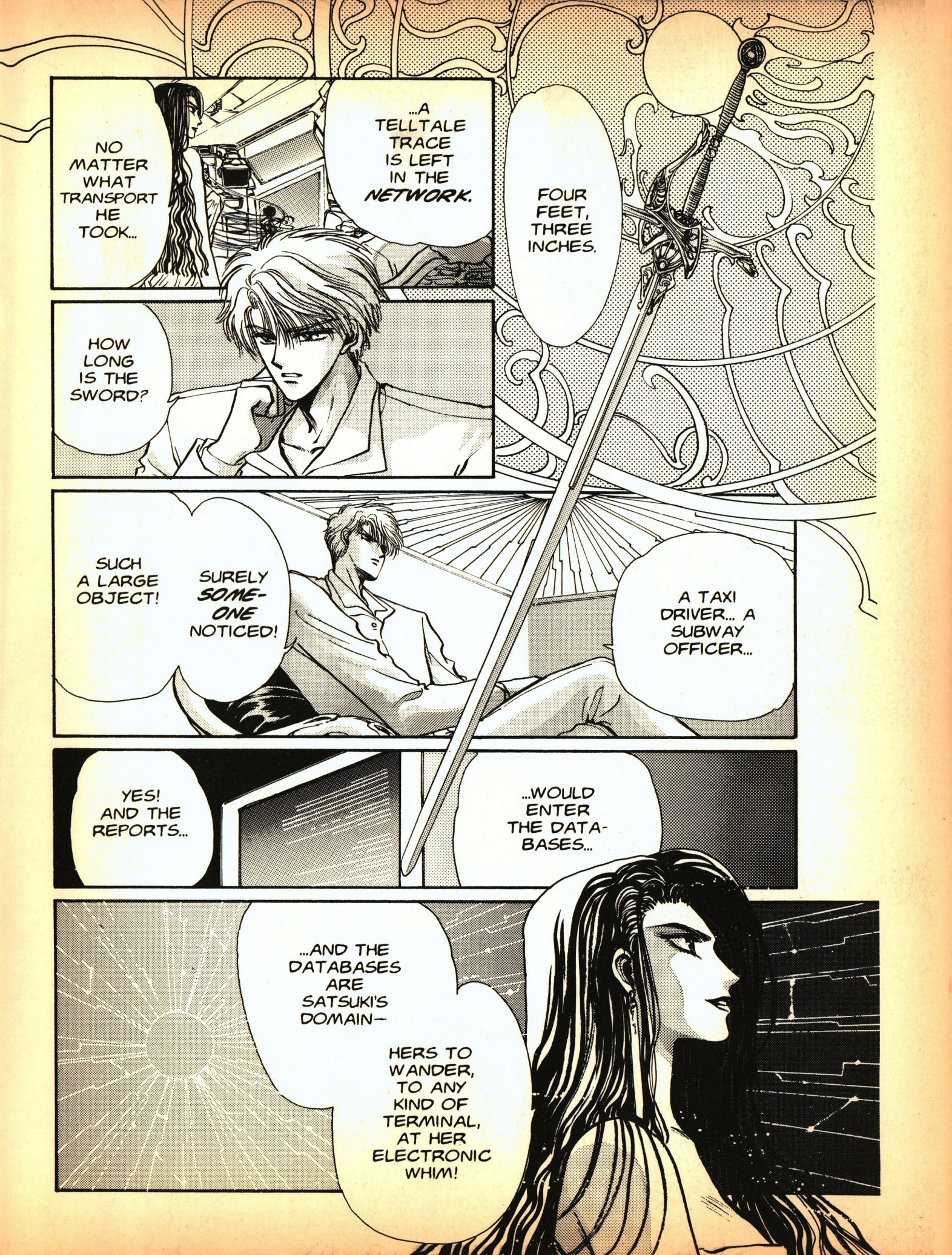

heh
NO.
I GUESS THEY GOT THE JUMP ON US.
WAS IT THAT FUNNY SOUTHERN BOY?
MT. KOYA...
...HEAD TEMPLE OF THE SHINGON SECT.
ONE OF THE FEW SACRED PLACES THAT STILL EXIST IN JAPAN...
THE BOY YOU EN-COUNTERED, YUTO...
SHK
...WAS THE VISITOR FROM MT. KOYA.

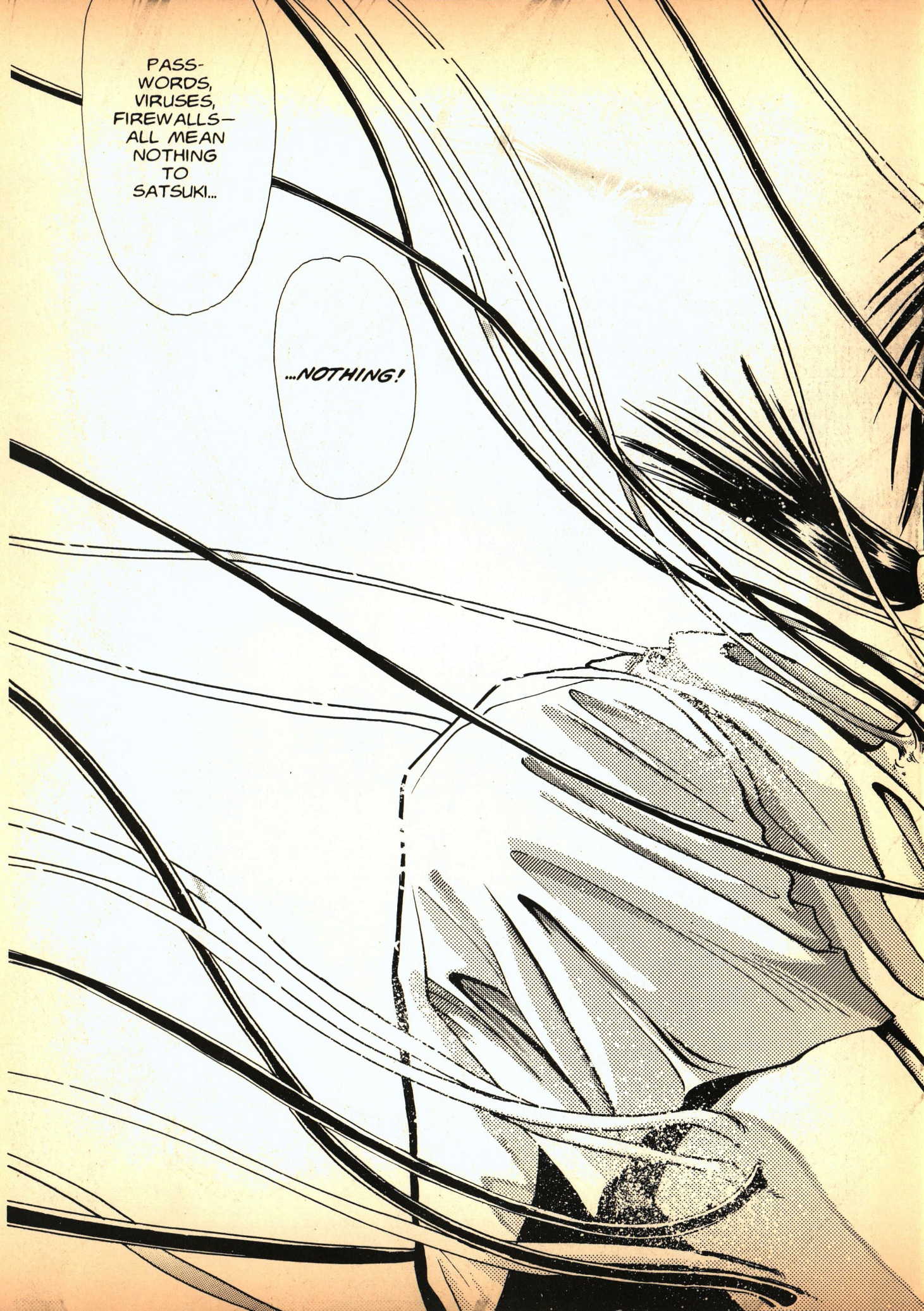

SO KOYA WAS HIDING ONE OF THE SEVEN SEALS—
JUST AS I THOUGHT.
THAT BOY IS A PRIEST? HA, HA, HA, HA!
SAT-SUKI.
CAN YOU TRACE THE WHERE-ABOUTS OF THE SWORD?
WHAT A TURN OF EVENTS!

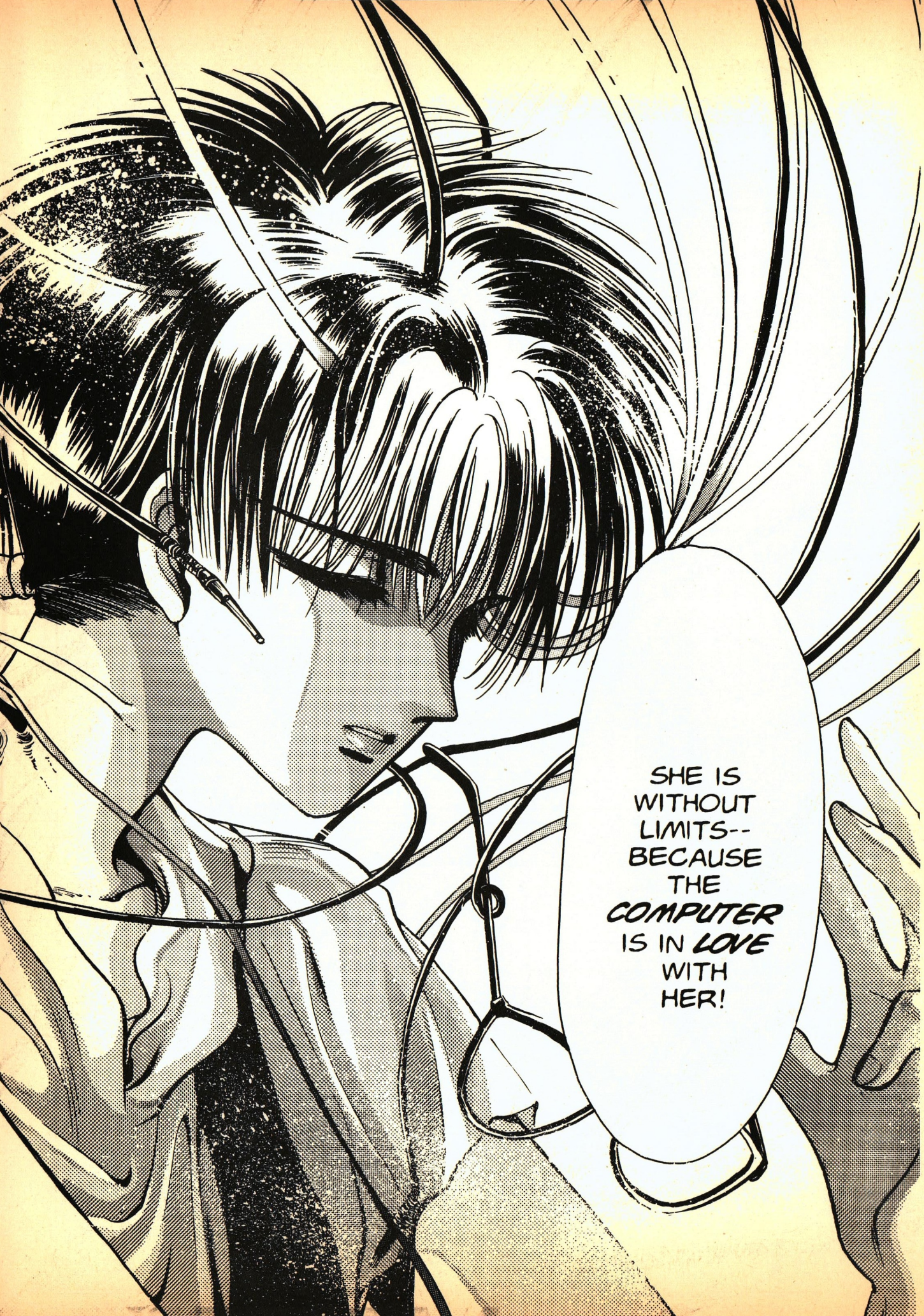

IF THE ONE WHO TOOK IT LEFT ANY EVIDENCE IN THE COMPUTER CIRCUITS, I'LL KNOW!
SHA
PLOP
PLOSH
SHWIPP

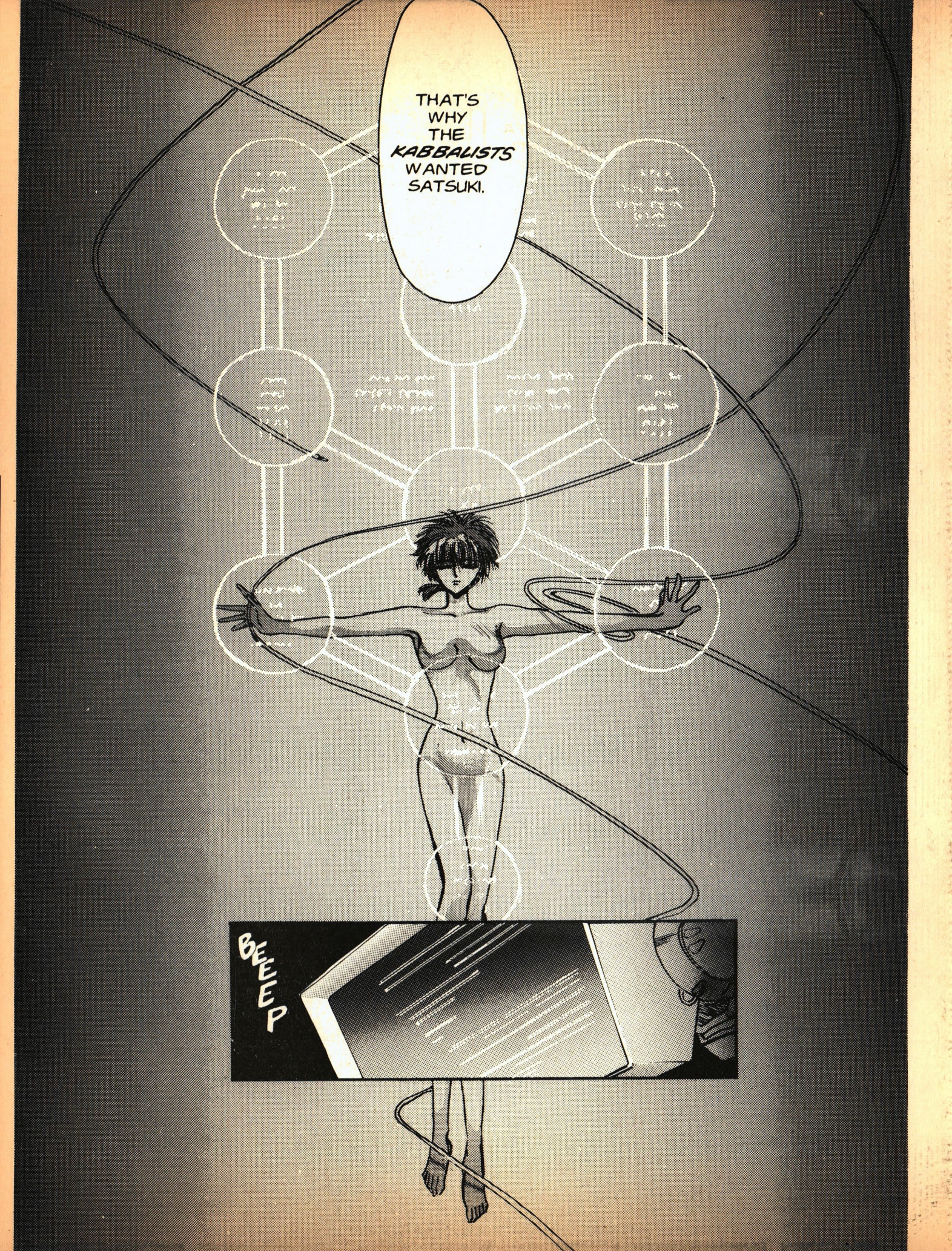
A STRANGE SIGHT, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I SEE IT!
SHRUP
RUP
RUP
SHOOP

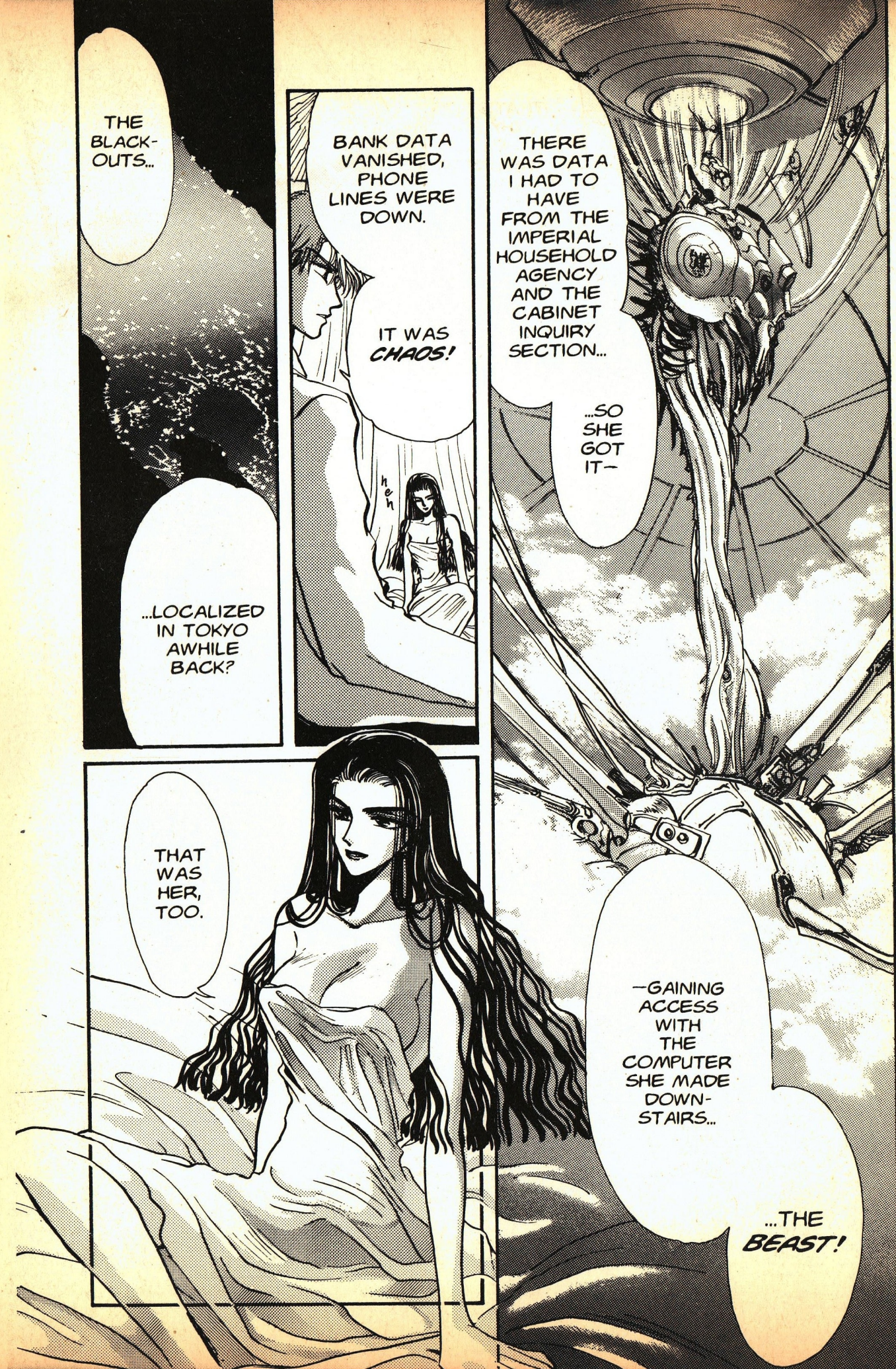

BEEP BEEP
IN THE MODERN WORLD, THERE IS NO ONE UNTOUCHED BY THE COMPUTER.
THEY'VE TAKEN ROOT IN EVERY HOUSE-HOLD—
—FROM SIMPLE AP-PLIANCES...
...TO THE CONTROL OF ELECTRIC, GAS, AND WATER SUPPLIES!
BUT, MOST IM-PORTANTLY, THE ELECTRONIC MIND CHARTS THE DATA-STREAM—
TRACKING EVERY THOUGHT, MOVEMENT, AND TRANSACTION!


NO MATTER WHAT TRANSPORT HE TOOK...
...A TELLTALE TRACE IS LEFT IN THE NETWORK.
FOUR FEET, THREE INCHES.
HOW LONG IS THE SWORD?
SUCH A LARGE OBJECT!
SURELY SOME-ONE NOTICED!
A TAXI DRIVER... A SUBWAY OFFICER...
YES! AND THE REPORTS...
...WOULD ENTER THE DATA-BASES...
...AND THE DATABASES ARE SATSUKI'S DOMAIN—
HERS TO WANDER, TO ANY KIND OF TERMINAL, AT HER ELECTRONIC WHIM!


PASS-
WORDS,
VIRUSES,
FIREWALLS—
ALL MEAN
NOTHING
TO
SATSUKI...
...NOTHING!

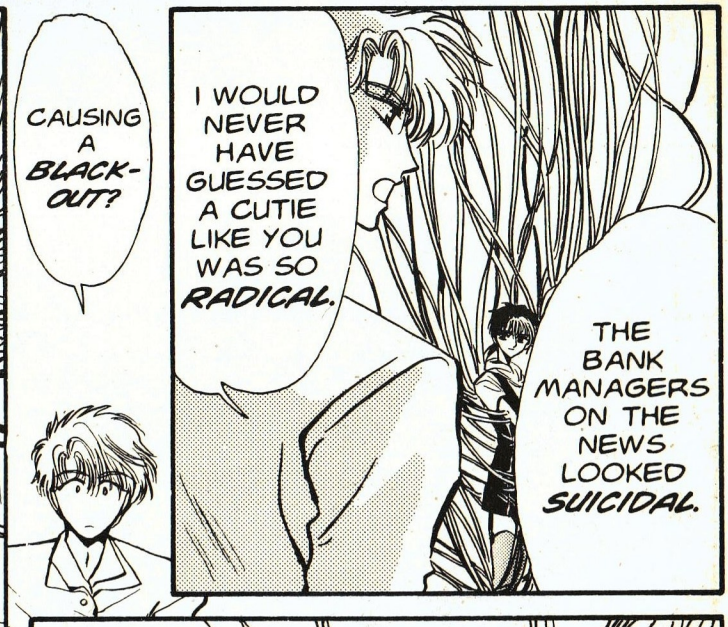

SHE IS WITHOUT LIMITS-- BECAUSE THE *COMPUTER* IS IN *LOVE* WITH HER!

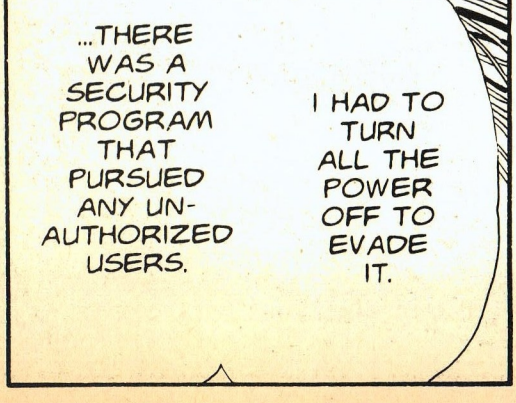

THAT'S WHY THE KABBALISTS WANTED SATSUKI.
BEEEP


THERE WAS DATA I HAD TO HAVE FROM THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD AGENCY AND THE CABINET INQUIRY SECTION...
...SO SHE GOT IT—
—GAINING ACCESS WITH THE COMPUTER SHE MADE DOWN-STAIRS...
...THE BEAST!
BANK DATA VANISHED, PHONE LINES WERE DOWN.
IT WAS CHAOS!
heh
THE BLACK-OUTS...
...LOCALIZED IN TOKYO AWHILE BACK?
THAT WAS HER, TOO.

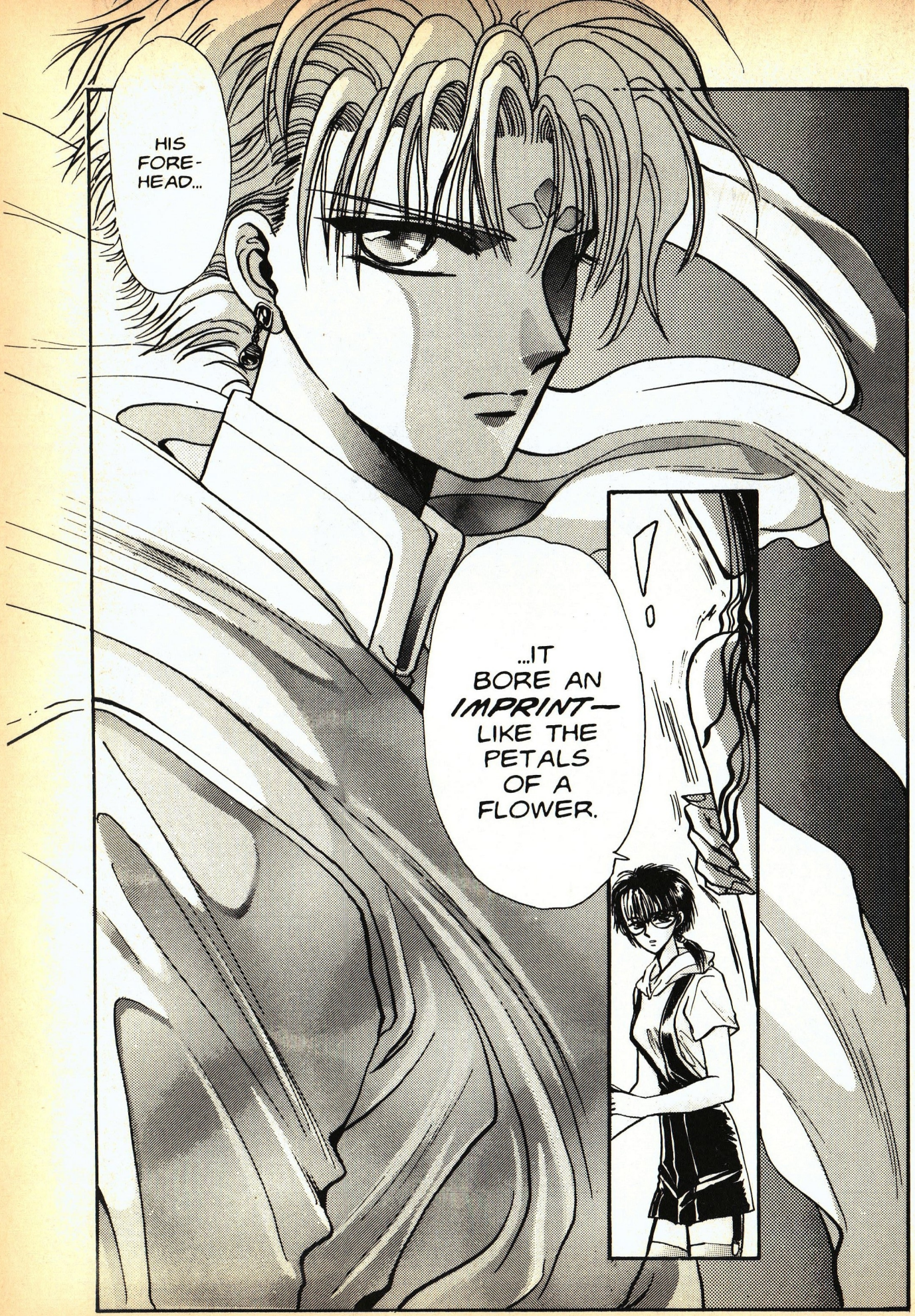
AH, YES! THE LITTLE "PET" SHE'S BEEN HIDING—
—IN HER ICEBOX ROOM.

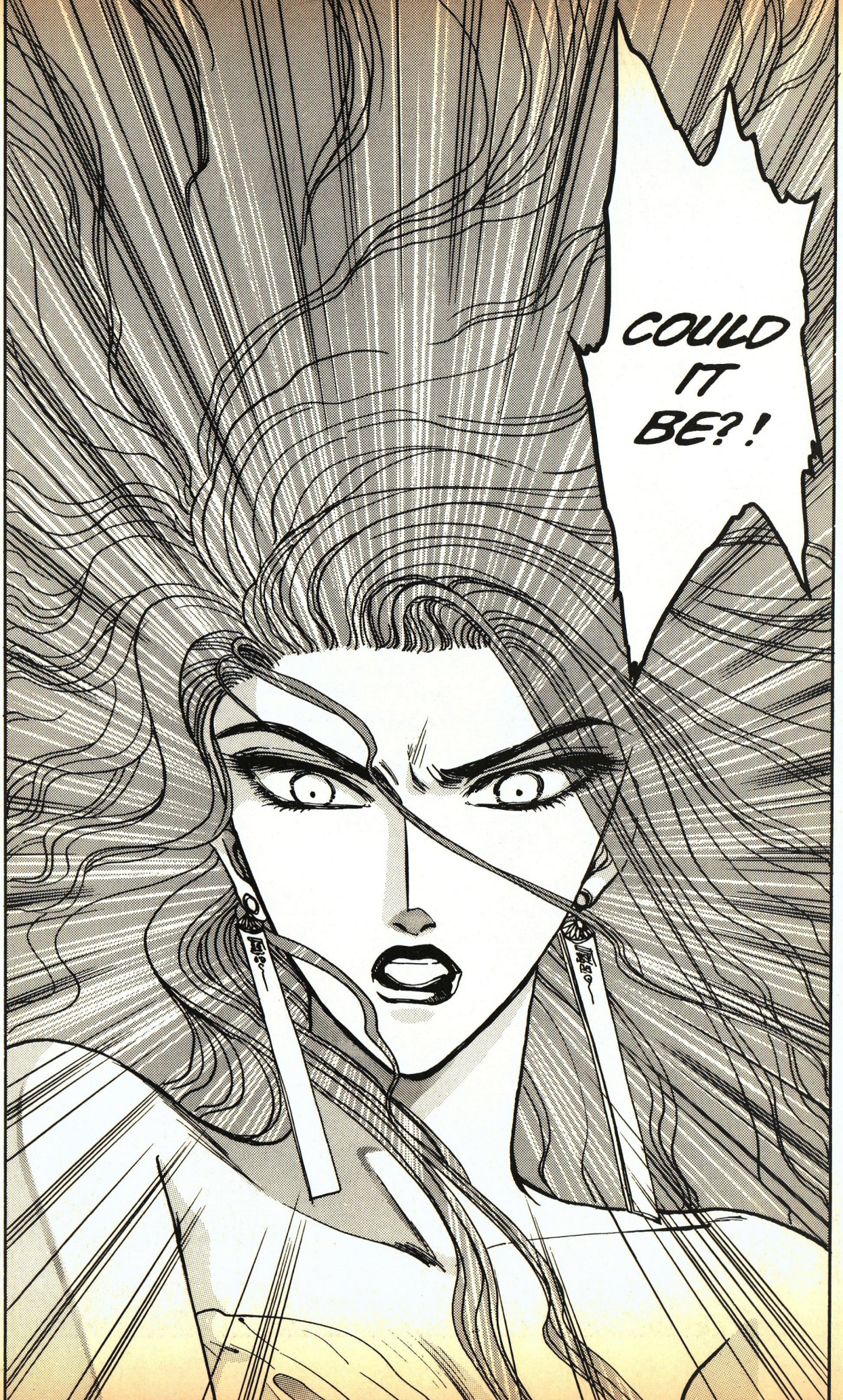
THAT TIME...


CAUSING A BLACK-OUT?
I WOULD NEVER HAVE GUESSED A CUTIE LIKE YOU WAS SO RADICAL.
THE BANK MANAGERS ON THE NEWS LOOKED SUICIDAL.


...THERE WAS A SECURITY PROGRAM THAT PURSUED ANY UN-AUTHORIZED USERS.
I HAD TO TURN ALL THE POWER OFF TO EVADE IT.

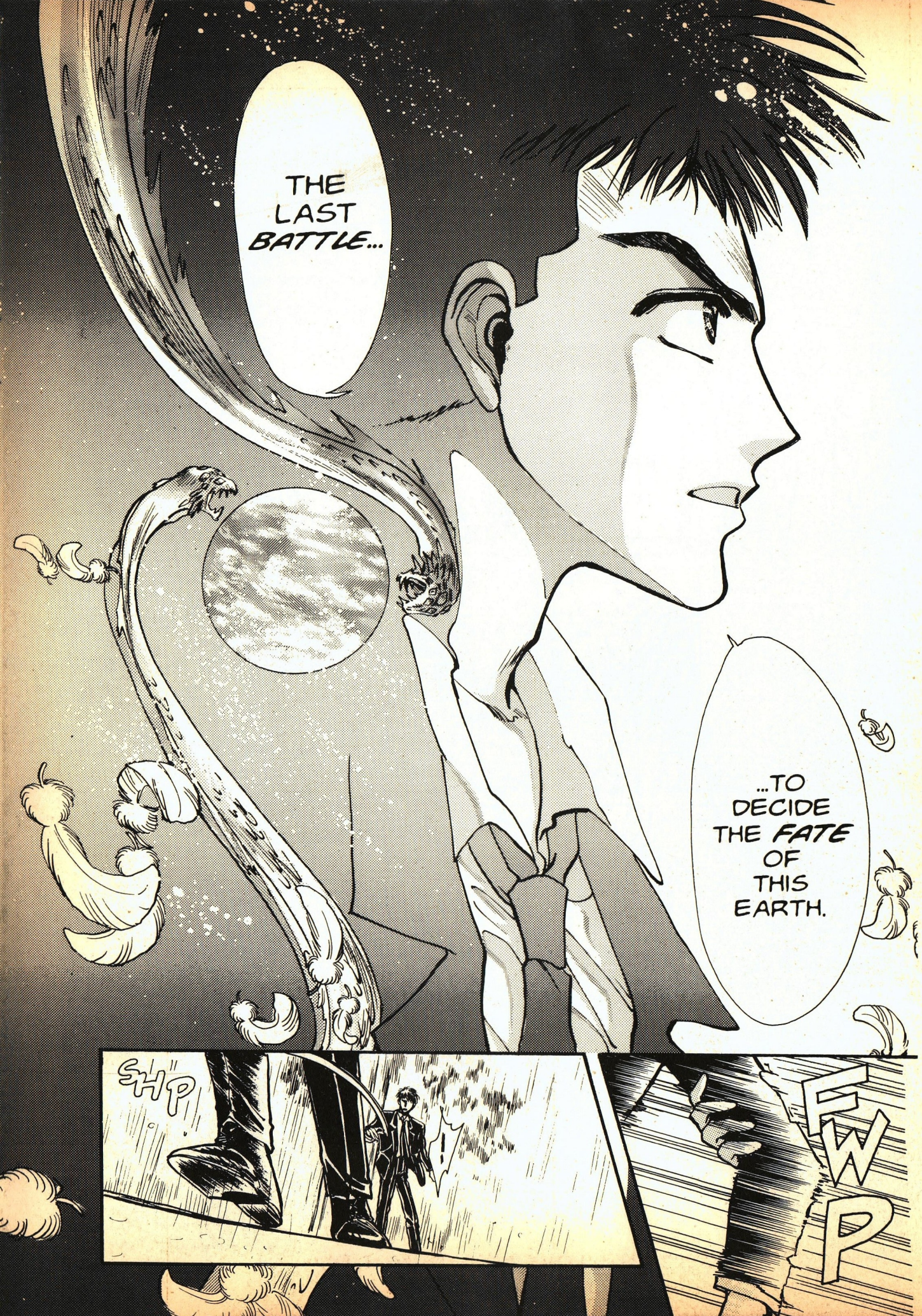
THEY LOST ALL THEIR CUSTOMER DATA!
IT WOULD TAKE MONTHS, AT LEAST...
...TO RESTORE ALL THAT THEY LOST.

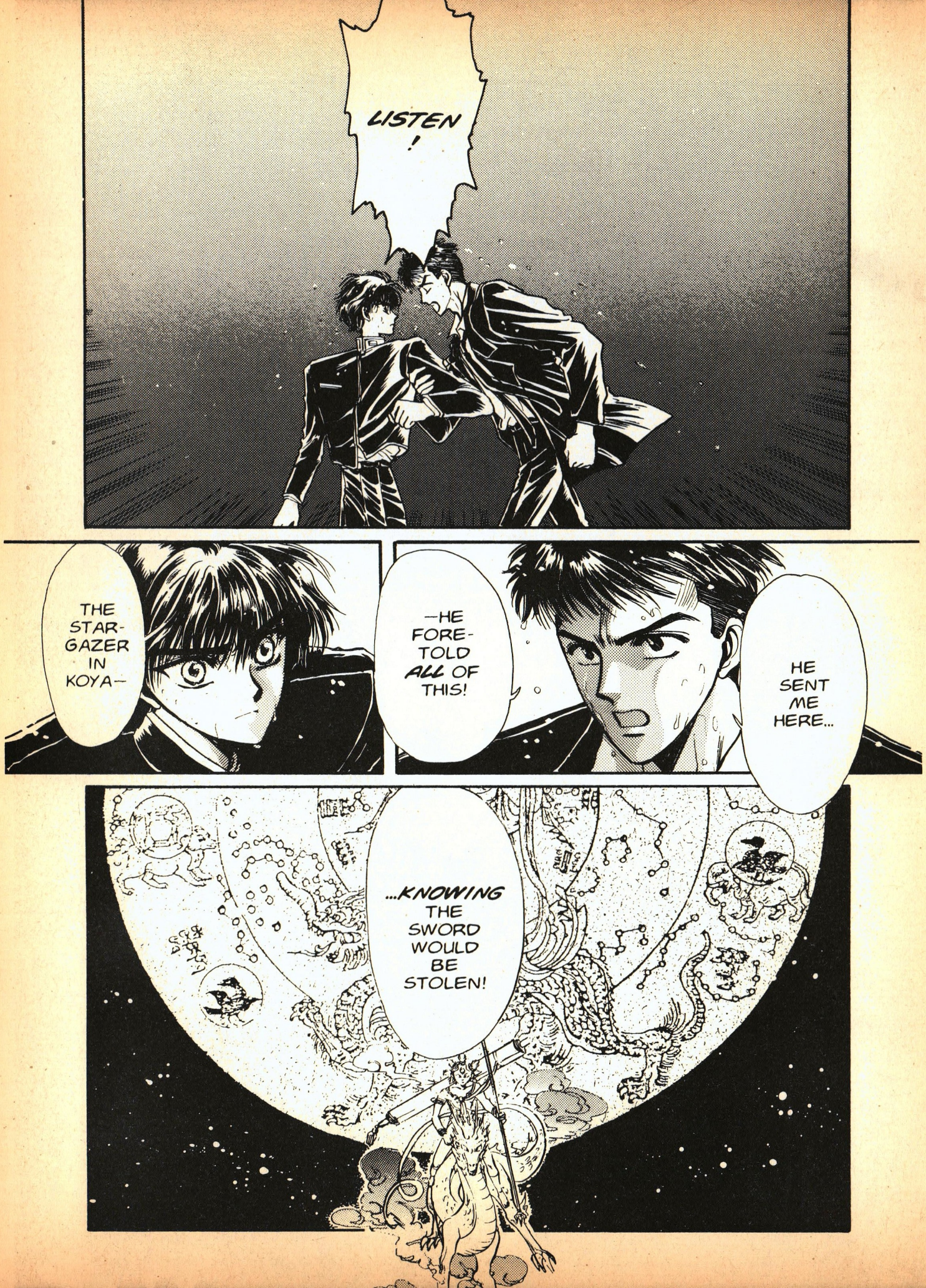

HIS FORE-HEAD...
...IT BORE AN IMPRINT— LIKE THE PETALS OF A FLOWER.
!


COULD IT BE?!

SHLOOP
KANOE.
THERE'S NO INDICATION HE ESCAPED USING TAXIS, TRAINS, OR OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORT-ATION.
BUT...
...SOME OFFICERS ON PATROL REPORTED SEEING A YOUNG MAN CARRYING SOMETHING—
—A LONG STICK WRAPPED IN CLOTH.
A YOUNG MAN?
YES. HIS LEFT HAND WAS COVERED IN BLOOD.
HMMM... HOW CREEPY.

SHAAASH
KAMUI...
KAMUI!
IT'S FINALLY STARTED, HASN'T IT, KAMUI?
THE TIME IS NOW!


THE LAST BATTLE...
...TO DECIDE THE FATE OF THIS EARTH.
SHP
!
FWP


LISTEN!
THE STAR-GAZER IN KOYA—
—HE FORE-TOLD ALL OF THIS!
HE SENT ME HERE...
...KNOWING THE SWORD WOULD BE STOLEN!

I AM SORATA ARISUGAWA~
~ONE OF... THE SEVEN SEALS.
TO BE CONTINUED...

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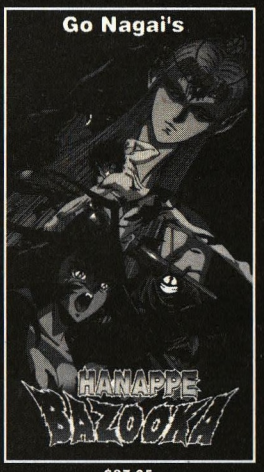

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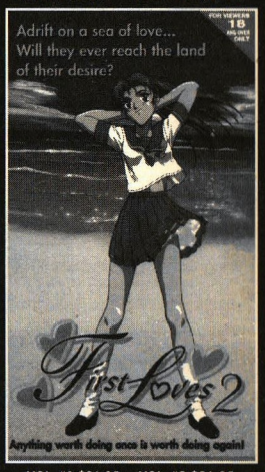

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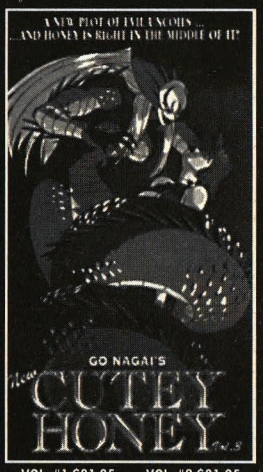

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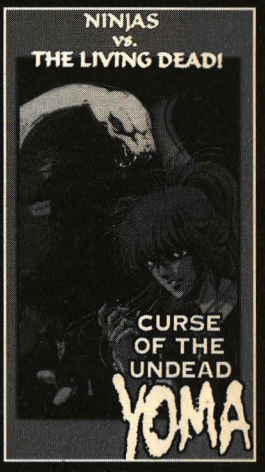

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Signature (Over 18 Years Old) _____

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Mew and Mica enjoy life as high school students on earth. One peaceful day, Mt. Fuji suddenly starts erupting. Hyper Dolls are at a fireworks show with their classmates. While there, Mimizu-man (a worm-like monster) appears and goes after Akai and Shoko. Hyper Doll prepares to fight. An action packed Science Fiction comedy whose original story was written by Shinpei Itoh (Moldiver). Bilingual (Digital - English, Analog - Japanese). A deluxe insert included.

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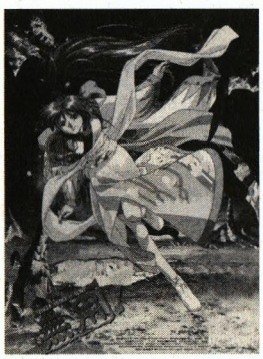

TENCHI MUYO IN LOVE (BILINGUAL LD, THX, AC-3)

Galaxy Police detectives Mihoshi and Kiyone are on routine patrol near Earth when they find out that the Galaxy Police headquarters has been blown up by a notorious terrorist named Kain who has just escaped from prison. Can Tenchi save Achika from the desastrous link to Kain? And what secret power does Achika posses?

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TENCHI MUYO IN LOVE (SUB VHS)

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Tenchi Muyo 7, 8/9, 10/11, 12/13 (DUB) each	~~24.98~~	*20%*	19.98
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Manga News
Manga CLOSE UP

With the increasing availability of English-translated titles from U.S.-based publishers, it's easier than ever for the non-Japanese reader to enter the exciting world of manga. Whether it's an English adaptation or an American original, each issue of Manga Close-Up brings you the latest news, reviews and special features from the American manga industry.

FEUDAL FURY

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL: CONQUEST

Some might think that being a master swordsman is something to be proud of, but the hero of ***BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL*** knows that it's actually a curse. Manji, a ronin warrior of feudal Japan with the blood of one hundred innocents on his hands, has been cursed with immortality by an old woman's sorcery until he can discover some kind of meaning to his life. After some soul-searching, he finally comes to a conclusion—to rid himself of this curse, regain his mortality, and to end his life of misery, he will slay one thousand evil men to make up for the one hundred innocents he killed. What kind of adventures will he encounter on his bloody quest?

Written and drawn by Hiroaki Samura, with translation by Studio Proteus' Dana Lewis and Toren Smith, ***BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL*** is quite unique in its technique for western adaptation—instead of the traditional "mirror-imaging" or "page-flopping" that is done to reverse the pages from Japanese-style right-to-left to left-to-right for English-language readers, in ***BLADE*** the individual panels have been cut apart and rearranged in reverse order. Thus the art is as it appeared in Japan, in a new layout which reads in the opposite direction. As integral parts of the artwork, some of the original sound effects have also been left in their original Japanese. All in all, ***BLADE*** is a uniquely "Japanese" reading experience! ***BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL: CONQUEST*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: THREE-ISSUE MINI-SERIES; 32 B&W PAGES; US$2.95 EACH.* ☆

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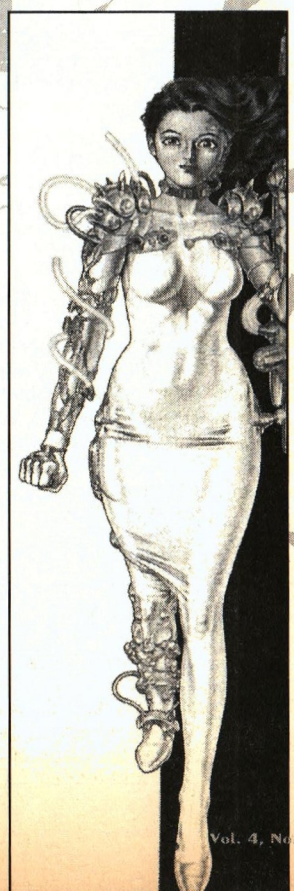
COLLECTED CATACLYSM

DIRTY PAIR: FATAL BUT NOT SERIOUS

DIRTY PAIR™ © 1996 Haruka Takachiho
English-language version © Adam Warren • Studio Proteus Dark Horse Comics

Adam Warren's made-in-America manga adaptation of the classic Japanese anime team of crime-bustin' females in teeny-weeny bikinis is still going strong, and getting stronger with every installment! Now you can get a graphic novel compilation of Warren's latest, ***DIRTY PAIR: FATAL BUT NOT SERIOUS***, which takes the infamous "trouble consultants" up against their toughest challenge yet! Though both feared and admired, all across the entire United Galactica, the Dirty Pair have never had to face their public like this before—at a Dirty Pair convention! Yes, it's true—a convention hall filled to the brim with Kei and Yuri worshippers, costumers, and autograph hounds clamoring for a sight of the "Lovely Angels" while social theologists debate the meaning of their choice of costume and their respective personality traits. But that's not *all* the Angels have to deal with—a fanatical cadre of genetic terrorists plan to wipe out the Dirty Pair once and for all, and they've come up with the ultimate weapon for their purpose—a neurochemically imbalanced, homicidal Yuri clone! How can the Angels find her in a hall full of Yuri wannabees, especially now that the fans have been dosed with a mutagen that makes them *hate* what they once loved? The ***DIRTY PAIR: FATAL BUT NOT SERIOUS*** trade paperback compilation features an all-new wraparound cover by Adam Warren. ***DIRTY PAIR: FATAL BUT NOT SERIOUS*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: TRADE PAPERBACK; 128 FULL-COLOR PAGES; US$14.95.* ☆



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MIND CONTROL MAYHEM

CHRONOWAR

The aliens didn't want to control her city. *They wanted to control her mind!* A decaying old satellite is headed straight for Tokyo, and the doomed city is completely evacuated—except for three citizens. A hard-boiled detective named Watanabe remains in the abandoned city to keep searching for his prey—a gaunt, desperate Machida, wanted for attempted murder. Aside from these two, also remaining is Chiaki, a stubborn housewife who refuses to believe that the satellite will hit Tokyo at all. But fate quickly proves Chiaki wrong, and when the satellite *does* hit, the three find that the city is less abandoned than before. *Someone* was riding that satellite down from orbit, and that someone wasn't born on Earth! Now Chiaki Yamamoto has more problems to occupy her mind than just housework, and detective Watanabe has bigger problem than one escaped murderer on his hands! Written and illustrated by Kazumasa Takayama, ***CHRONOWAR*** features translation by Studio Proteus' own Dana Lewis and Toren Smith. ***CHRONOWAR*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: NINE-ISSUE MINI-SERIES; 32 B&W PAGES; US$2.95.* ☆

EXPLODIN' HEADS WITH TETSUO HARA

*The artist of the kung fu fightin', head-explodin', apocalyptic saga **FIST OF THE NORTH STAR** stopped by at San Diego Comic-Con to sign a few autographs and meet some of the fans. Here's what he had to say about his work, animation, live-action movies and why big, manly martial artists go Wa-TAAHH!* ***By Carl Gustav Horn*** *and* ***James Teal***

ANIMERICA: What was your training to be a manga artist?

Hara: When I was 20, and still going to school, I started out as an assistant to Yoshihiro Takahashi, who did ***SHOOTING STAR GINGA***.

ANIMERICA: I heard you worked under Kazuo Koike, the writer of ***LONE WOLF AND CUB*** and ***CRYING FREEMAN***.

Hara: I used to attend a school that Kazuo Koike ran, and I went there for three semesters.

ANIMERICA: Did you actually train in the martial arts yourself? If so, do you practice it or research it from an academic standpoint, or are you interested in more "internal" martial arts like tai ch'i or "external" ones like karate?

Hara: I did take a little bit of judo, a little bit of kendo. I've researched the Chinese martial arts. I really like Bruce Lee, but personally, I don't find anything interesting about *realistic* martial arts—it's just two people duking it out. I like to imagine things that *don't* exist in nature: like powers that can destroy somebody from the inside. Something that can only exist in an imaginary world is the kind of martial arts *I* like.

ANIMERICA: You're pretty famous for your depictions of violence, but is it part of your philosophy on portraying things from an imaginary world? I mean, people don't *really* bleed like that in reality.

Hara: That's *exactly* it.

ANIMERICA: Well then, if you're using violence within a world of fantasy, how do you feel about the censorship of such violence?

Hara: What bothers me more than censorship is the flopping of my pages in Western editions. [LAUGHS] But as long as the fun or the interesting parts of the comic aren't lost through censorship, I don't really mind it. That's done on a country-by-country basis; I don't really think Japan gets into the censorship of violence. [*In America, the* ***FIST OF THE NORTH STAR*** *manga is published unedited by Viz Comics—Ed.*]

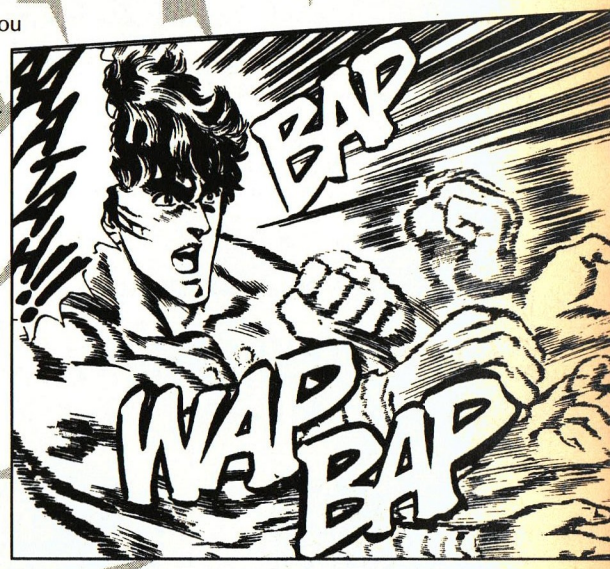
ANIMERICA: Then again, the animated movie version of ***FIST*** was "computer-censored," that is, the more violent scenes were covered by a digitized screen. What's your opinion on the anime version of your work? And do you think that the animated ***FIST*** has had an effect on how anime violence and/or martial arts is portrayed?

Hara: I don't watch anime. I really hate it. Even the animated ***FIST***—I didn't like it, so I really didn't watch it. Personally, at least with my works, I think that since other people do the anime work for which my comics are just a basis, it tends to fall away from my vision of things, and in doing so, it just doesn't have any interest for me. If anything, I'd like to make my own animation. Other people who watch the anime version of ***FIST*** seem to say that it adapts the story very well. But for me, being the creator, it just doesn't look right. So some day I'd like to take a hand at creating my anime by directing or otherwise doing storyboards, that sort of thing.

ANIMERICA: Can you explain what in particular you didn't like about the animated version?

Hara: It's a little bit different from the way I imagined ***FIST*** to be—it's just not cool. [LAUGHS]

ANIMERICA: Do you have any American influences? Certain scenes in the ***FIST*** manga seemed to be influenced by American movies with Sylvester Stallone....



Hara: When it comes to American artists, I like Neal Adams and Frank Frazetta. Originally, I was a fan of Ryoichi Ikegami (***CRYING FREEMAN***, ***SANCTUARY***). But then I found out that Ikegami was a fan of Neal Adams, so I thought, why not go to the "root" and see why he likes it. And when I was drawing ***FIST***, I liked America a lot, so I think it influenced a great deal of it...I threw in a mishmash of things such as Chinese martial arts, but I think my fondness for America came through in a lot of it. I really like ***MAD MAX***—I know it's Australian, but all the same. Plus ***TERMINATOR***, ***RAMBO***, ***ROCKY***....

ANIMERICA: How about spaghetti westerns, like Sergio Leone's ***A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS*** **?** There seems to be a villain in ***FIST***, who smashes his flunkies' heads together, who looks like "The Man With No Name"...

Hara: I don't really like Eastwood movies that much. I like the way he *looks*. There's a character named "Shu" that I modeled after Eastwood. The guy *you're* talking about is based on one of the pirates in Jackie Chan's ***PROJECT A***.

ANIMERICA: Could you comment briefly on your upcoming projects?

Hara: I'm currently unemployed! [LAUGHS]

ANIMERICA: And the now-traditional close...do you have any sort of message for your American fans?

Hara: I'd like to make something so incredible that it could *really* be a hit worldwide—please look forward to it. ☆

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Frederik Schodt

Four-time author and translator extraordinaire ***Frederik L. Schodt*** *(**INSIDE THE ROBOT KINGDOM, AMERICA AND THE FOUR JAPANS: FRIEND, FOE, MODEL, MIRROR**, and his latest book, **DREAMLAND JAPAN: WRITINGS ON MODERN MANGA**) takes a look at how the manga world has changed in the thirteen years since his groundbreaking book, **MANGA! MANGA! THE WORLD OF JAPANESE COMICS**.*

THE TIMES, THEY ARE A' CHANGIN'

Yes, it's true. There once was a time when manga and anime were unknown outside of Japan. There were no translated manga books, no dubbed or subbed videos, no conventions, no magazines like ANIMERICA or MANGAJIN or MANGA MANIA, and no snazzy sites on the World Wide Web. For that matter, there were no video tape recorders, and no personal computers. Needless to say, there was no Web.

I've recently reflected on these changes, because this year I finally finished the sequel to my 1983 work, ***MANGA! MANGA! THE WORLD OF JAPANESE COMICS***. Titled ***DREAMLAND JAPAN: WRITINGS ON MODERN MANGA***, the new book covers what has happened in manga in Japan in the intervening years, and it also has a section on the popularity of manga and its media offspring—anime—in the English-speaking world. While writing the new book I therefore kept remembering what it was like to write the first one.

I started writing and researching ***MANGA! MANGA!*** in the late seventies. I wrote the first drafts in longhand and laboriously typed them up on an IBM Selectric typewriter. For revisions, I cut and pasted sections, not electronically with a mouse but manually with scissors and glue. My apartment floor was always covered with long sheets of paper because I found, before typing the final version, that gluing several pages together in long sections helped me see how things would finally fit together. In retrospect, there was an enjoyable tactile aspect to this labor, but I'm not about to give my modern computer away!

I really had to scrounge for any information on manga or anime outside of Japan. Until a translated version of Keiji Nakazawa's autobiographical A-bomb tale, ***BAREFOOT GEN***, appeared at the end of the seventies, there were no manga available in English, so almost no one knew what manga or anime were. In fact, when it came time to choose the title of my book, I had a disagreement with my editor. He wanted to use *manga* on the cover. I opted for a more academic-sounding title ("Japanese Comics: A New Visual Culture"), because I was afraid most people would confuse "manga" with "manganese," or with an Italian word for eating. Luckily, editors usually have the final say on book titles, and in this case I'm glad that I lost out.

For my new book, my greatest difficulty in writing about manga and anime overseas was simply that there is now so much information on both art forms. In an article in the 17 September 1995 edition of the ***The New York Times***, writer Ty Ahmad-Taylor estimates that the market for translated manga in America is US$10 million, and US$50 million for anime videos. As if reflecting this, nearly every comics specialty store now has a rack or two of translated Japanese manga by Viz or Dark Horse/Studio Proteus or Antarctic Press, major video and music chain stores now carry dubbed and subbed anime, and the fan community is exploding in size. It isn't happening just in North America, of course, but also in Australia, Asia proper, and Europe. And all the various communities of fans are increasingly linked together and synergized by the global Internet and its subset, the World Wide Web, the vast sea of information contained in both making it possible for true aficionados to access more information (and disinformation) than ever before dreamed possible. For that matter, more and more non-Japanese are also doing serious research and writing about manga. Matthew Thorn is writing his doctoral dissertation at Columbia University on *shôjo*, or girls' manga. At Britain's University of Stirling, Jonathan Clements did his Master of Philosophy on Japan's manga and anime exports. And in the space of a year, two books on anime have been published in English—in the U.S., Trish Ledoux and Doug Ranney's ***THE COMPLETE ANIME GUIDE***; in the U.K., Helen McCarthy's ***THE ANIME MOVIE GUIDE***. As for the words "manga" and "anime," American and European fans of have adopted both, and soon both will probably be listed in a standard English dictionary. There's even a Japanese bistro in Berkeley, California, named—of all things—"Manga-Manga."

There's also a lot more information on manga and anime available in *Japan* today than there was in the late seventies and early eighties. When I was researching and writing ***MANGA! MANGA!***, I read nearly all the Japanese books of criticism on manga than then existed. This time that would have been impossible, for there simply are too many—a fact that reflects not only the emergence of more critics, but the enormous growth rates of the industry itself. When ***MANGA! MANGA!*** was published, manga represented twenty-seven percent of the total sales volume of all books and magazines in Japan (a statistic that astounded many non-Japanese). Today, thirteen years later, manga represent nearly *forty* percent of the total. Manga—which are really sort of a meta-media for anime and many other forms of expression—have become firmly established in modern Japanese society as a full-fledged medium of creative expression, on par with traditional entertainment media like films and novels. And around the world, manga are finally getting the recognition they deserve. ★

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When you notice how many of the manga titles listed each week are made into animated videos, you begin to understand the critical link between the manga and anime industries in Japan.

JAPAN'S MANGA TOP TEN

The Bestselling Comics, Compiled by Books Nippan, Japan (Based on Sales Figures as of 4/30/96)

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1 .....***SLAM DUNK • 28***
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Takehiko Inoue • Shueisha • ¥400

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るろうに剣心.10
Nobuhiro Watsuki • Shueisha • ¥400

3 .....***OTANKO NURSE • 2***
おたんこナース.2
("Ditzy Nurse")
Noriko Sasaki • Shogakukan • ¥980

4 .....***YAKUMO TATSU • 4***
八雲立つ.4
("Yakumo Stands")
Natsumi Itsuki • Hakusensha • ¥400

5 .....***KINDAICHI SHÔNEN NO JIKENBO • 17***
金田一少年の事件簿.17
("The Case Files of Young Kindaichi")
Yosaburo Kanenari and Fumiya Sato• Kodansha • ¥400

6 .....***SEIDEN RG VEDA • VOL. 10***
聖伝-リグベーダ-.10
("Holy Legend RG Veda")
Clamp • Shinshokan • ¥520

7 .....***MEITANTEI CONAN • 10***
名探偵コナン.10
GREAT DETECTIVE CONAN
Gosho Aoyama • Shogakukan • ¥400

8 .....***TENCHI MUYÔ! RYO-OH-KI • 4***
天地無用！両皇鬼.4
Hitoshi Okuda • Shogakukan • ¥560

9 .....***H 2 • 16***
H2-エイチツー-.16
Mitsuru Adachi • Shogakukan • ¥400

10 ...***AA! MEGAMI-SAMA • 13***
ああっ女神さまっ.13
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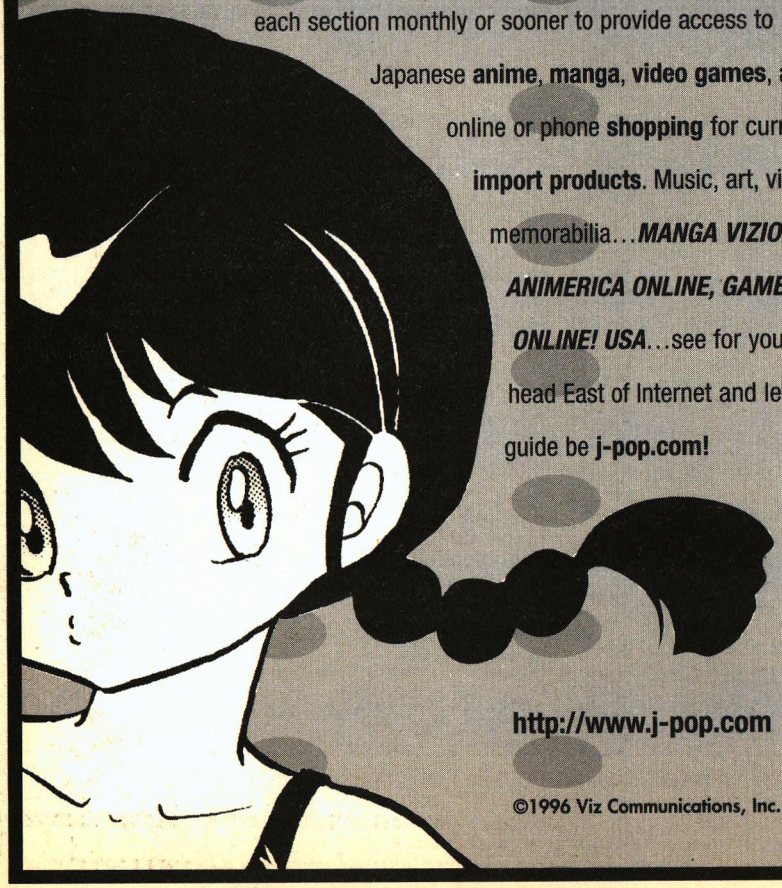

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"Hi! I'm Mai Anime™. This section is where I get my smart-alecky friends to give you advice—whether you need it or not—on the latest import-only anime TV shows, OAVs, and movies (plus the occasional live-action show). I've got to move fast here today...I've got a date to help slam evil!"

SHADOW SKILL

VOL. 2.5, ACT 16: "KARMA"

Genre: Martial Arts • Bandai Visual/Star Child • Catalog No.: KIVA 236/KILA-139 VHS/LD • 50 mins. • ¥7800/¥7800

© 1995 Take Shobo • Shadow Skill Production Committee

JAMES

A story of a boy coming of age through trials of intense combat. The super martial arts-type action and incredible hand-to-hand fighting in this video surpass anything I have seen in recent months. I have no idea how the manga is, but I certainly plan to find out now.

JULIE

As much as I love Masami Obari's pyrotechnics in ***FATAL FURY***, I'll admit to finding ***SHADOW SKILL***'s approach refreshingly sweaty and real—glistening, hard-bodied fighters grunting and gasping their way through realistic (for anime martial arts) slugfests. Like ***STRIPTEASE***, the abundance of amazingly firm flesh on display is like an inspirational excercise video.

MARK

It was neat to see the great Scarface in action—this martial artist is so cool he can whack the arms off a sixty-foot-tall werewolf just by raising his eyebrow—but after that, all you get is a couple of earnest young characters beating each other up for what seems like hours. I eventually stopped worrying that they were going to sustain any real damage, but the tedium damn near finished me off.

GREG

I've seen this tape around on the shelves for a while; I wish someone had pointed it out earlier. More sinewy characters pummeling the living hell out of one another—this one has foul moves we've yet to see in any fighting game. Beyond the action, what I could tell of the story makes me want to know more. I'd say it's well worth at least one viewing.

MARK

GREG

JAMES

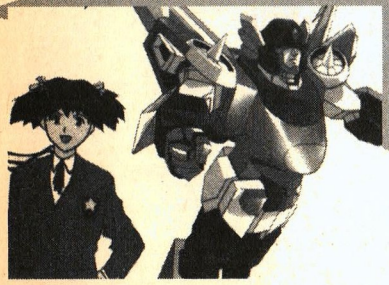
JULIE

MAI

The opening scene was enough to convince me that I'd found a winner—a hard-bodied chick who doesn't squeal, and a hard-bodied young man in tight shorts are fighting it out tied together at the wrist in a wonderful muscle-straining, pulse-pounding slam fest. As if that weren't enough, you also get werewolves and other pyrotechnics thrown in for good measure, and a reprise of the opening fight. I LOVED it!

YÛSHA SHIREI DAGUON

HERO COMMAND DAGUON
On-Air in Japan • Saturdays @ 5:00 p.m. on TV Asahi



© 1996 Sunrise • Nagoya TV

JAMES

This combination of ***TRANSFORMERS***, ***SAMURAI TROOPERS*** (a.k.a. ***RONIN WARRIORS***) and the ***POWER RANGERS*** has a lot of entertainment value going for it. Guys in powered armor combining with transforming vehicles, fighting giant monsters. Yow! What more could you ask? The toy manufacturers are going berserk!

JULIE

It may start out like a ***POWER RANGERS***-type show, with the color-coded heroes and their various human-sized fighting modes, but when they go into power-up mode, it's so ***TRANSFORMERS*** that I felt a real wave of nostalgia. I love the really big "jumbo jet" robot and the powered-up alien running around absorbing battleships and airplanes, getting bigger and adding weaponry with each stage. For kids, but fun.

MARK

In the "yûsha" (hero) alien-of-the-week tradition, our heroes power up and morph into ***TRANSFORMERS***-style living robots to wrap up each episode. Given that the creators of the previous yûsha show (***GOLDORAN***) are now doing a ***GUNDAM*** series with a similar cast of characters—both have a punky-looking, scowling blond kid with a fur-lined bomber jacket—I can't help but compare and decide that I like ***DAGUON***'s cast better than ***GUNDAM X***'s.

GREG

Yet another animated "sentai" type show. Well, okay, it is for kids, but I really can't forgive how uninspired it felt. It's got lots of okay-looking ***TRANSFORMERS***-like vehicles and passably okay characters, but with such cool other shows around (especially such cool stuff as ***GUNDAM WING***), it's not what you should waste your time on. Go rent yourself some ***ESCAFLOWNE***. You'll thank me for that.

I liked it okay, but my hopes were actually a bit higher when I first saw the designs for the show. I guess I was hoping for something a bit more like ***TEKKAMAN BLADE*** with five guys instead of one, but it's really more like ***TRANSFORMERS*** with more human characters. Well, I guess ***TEKKAMAN BLADE*** would be a bit hard to live up to...but ***DAGUON*** still has pretty cool character designs. The show's a little too kiddy for me, though.

NEXT MONTH:
MEMORIES • LANDLOCK

Indelibly impressed as a youth by such classic robot fights as the Gundam vs. Ziong grudge match, the Alphonse vs. Zero slugfest and the L-Gaim Mark II vs. Original Auge showdown, **Mark Simmons** isn't impressed by any final battle that doesn't involve the loss of body parts.

For ***FATAL FURY*** fan **Greg Lincoln**, combat's gotta be hand-to-hand—the more painful it looks, the better. The gymnastic hand-bound combat in ***SHADOW SKILL***—now there was some pain goin' on!—reminds him so much of *capoiera*, he's tempted to start going back to classes and kick some butt himself. Hiyaa!

Mecha show maven and video game virtuoso **James Teal** comments that the loss of body parts and the continuing of combat he can certainly respect—as far as mecha is concerned—but that he rarely sees it for *human* combat outside of the video game ***Time Killers***.

Jean-Claude Van Damme fan, and currently riveted to the Olympics, **Julie Davis** finds animated or live-action fighting game-style combat the equivalent of watching gymnastics or any other sport which showcases human perfection—with the added drama that you could get *killed*! Bread and circuses, indeed.

Mai Anime™ *(youthful yet surly ward to the pompous Major Anime™) feels driven to mention that only through hard work and a burning sense of justice does anyone ever attain their heart's desire. That, and carrying a big, big stick!*

- ***LEGEND OF CRYSTANIA***
- ***ST. TAIL***

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN

Based on the game for the **Sony PlayStation**

Genre: Martial Arts Action • BMG Victor
•Catalog No.: BVVA-18/BVLA-18
VHS/LD • 30 mins. • ¥5800/¥5800

© 1996 Takara Co., Ltd.

If you know you're gonna be a fighting game-type character, with all them power moves and energy blasts, then you oughta take a little extra time out from the muscle training and do some mental exercises, or learn from the Dali Lama how not to get possessed! It happens too often to good fighters! But anyway...that guy "Eiji" is mine. YOU CAN'T HAVE HIM!

JAMES

If you've played the video game, watch it! If you have not, watch it anyway! Beautiful character designs, intense fighting and a deeper story than I was expecting fill out this video wonderfully. My only complaint is that it's too short! I eagerly await the rest of the series!

JULIE

Forget live-action—this is the kind of art direction that reminds me why I love anime in the first place. Every scene is bathed in its own kind of eerie lighting cast, from blue to green to red, and the characters are oddly pale, iridescent eyes shining, even in the high-contrast "sunlight." Cool story, top-notch fighting, and the characters have never looked better. Thumbs up.

MARK

Gawd, this was beautifully done, but isn't it just the ***STREET FIGHTER II*** movie with a different cast of characters? I'm not weeping to see the ***TOSHINDEN*** cast starring in a gorgeous retelling of the classic evil-organization-bent-on-world-domination-brainwashes-world's-top-martial-artists-and-sets-them-at-each-others'-throats plotline, but like ***SF II***, there's not enough time to showcase everyone; if your fave barely rates a cameo, maybe you'll join me in hoping for a TV series.

GREG

Initially, the character designs are a little strange, but they grow on you—by the time of Gaia and Eiji's fight, you're hooked. This one is real promising and no wonder—it's directed by Masami Obari, and boy, can he direct fighting action—the end will leave you begging for more (hell, this will get you playing the game!). A must-see for all fans of Obari and the game.

SAILOR MOON SAILOR STARS

SAILOR MOON SST

Based on the manga ***SAILOR MOON*** by **Naoko Takeuchi** serialized in NAKAYOSHI magazine.
On-Air in Japan • Saturdays @ 7:00 p.m. on TV Asahi

© 1996 Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • Toei

SAILOR MOON isn't exactly what I ever pictured myself watching—I mean, a butt-kicking gal like myself doesn't really go for dresses with bows, y'know? But I gotta say, it's pretty cool that when it comes right down to the final fight, the girls do all the heavy lifting, while nine times out of ten, Tuxedo Mask is the one in distress. And most of the villains are either really tough, evil women or good-lookin' guys! I like it.

JAMES

The story certainly has matured into a more serious tone, but even so, the characters are still their old selves. Usagi is just as silly as she has always been. I did miss Luna and Artemis however. I certainly hope that they continue to translate the show for American viewers to enjoy.

JULIE

I got hooked with the English show, then I had to see how the "Rini" storyline turned out...and now, ***SAILOR STARS***. The opening song is different (gasp!), and the tone is darker to match their new school uniforms. The eroticism is turned up as well—in the "Sleeping Beauty" storyline I saw, Moon has to climb through a forest of thorns to an enchanted castle to rescue the imprisoned Tuxedo Mask. Rowr.

MARK

Moon and Venus are still goofballs, the other Sailors are noble and self-sacrificing as ever, and Tuxedo Mask is still the world's easiest hypnosis subject—beats me how they'll be able to look after this boy for a thousand years so he can become king of Crystal Tokyo, when all an evil sorceress has to do is snap her fingers and he's her brainwashed love slave. Nice incidental music—sinister organ chords, ethereal theremin tones, even crazy calliope music for Moon's new attack.

GREG

I'll admit it, I *do* watch the American show on occasion—it's actually funny in a twisted sort of way. This all-girls ***SAINT SEIYA***-style show feels like more of the same, except in original Japanese. It's got a cool sexy female bad guy...uh, ur...girl. (I go for women that are gonna hurt me, so sue me.) It's worth it at least to see the other "Sailor Scouts" (more mean chicks, yeah!).

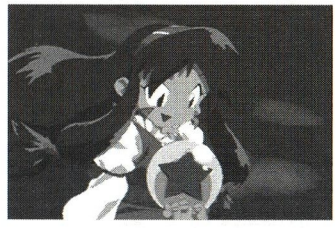
AV Interface

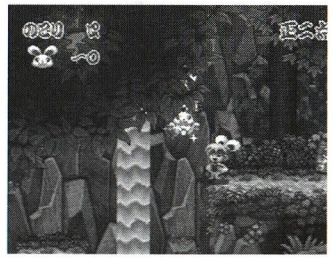
*Ever wanted to play a character from your favorite anime or manga? Video games can add a whole new dimension to enjoying anime. Each month, ANIMERICA's video game expert **Sergei Lee Aish** shares tips and advice to help you achieve your highest score ever.*

KEIO YÛGEKI-TAI
or "KEIO FLYING SQUADRON"

System:	Type:	Developer:
Sega Saturn	Platform Action	JVC
Available:	**Price:**	**Notes:**
Now (Japan)	$50	Another game in the *Keio Flying Squadron* series.

Do you like raccoons? Sure you do—they are furry, cute and they even got Studio Ghibli to do a movie in their honor. I do like them, as long as they stay (a) in the movies and (b) in wildlife habitats, such as other people's backyards. Unfortunately, they do not, which means that I have to start every Wednesday morning by hauling out the garbage, 'cause if I leave it overnight, the miserable pests will strew it all over the sidewalk. Come to think of it, I don't like them at *all*, but, being a more or less civilized person, I'm trying to do my best to prevent my anti-raccoon feelings from boiling over.





Thankfully, JVC came up with an excellent wish-fulfillment fantasy for all of us who are being victimized by wayward wildlife on a regular basis. If you ever played the original ***Keio*** game for the Sega CD, you should know that raccoons (under the leadership of Dr. Pon, the raccoon genius extraordinaire) not only eat other people's garbage, but also plan to take over the world. This time Dr. Pon is again up to something and it is up to the Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife...just kidding...Rami and her pet dragon Pochi to get to the bottom of things.

The story opens nicely with a FMV (full-motion video) intro and I was glad that JVC did not skimp on the ending, although animated intermissions after *EVERY* level would have been even better. The graphics, while nice to look at, are not much of an improvement over the better 16-bit platformers, except for the bosses which are both impressive and bizarre. The soundtrack leans towards the traditional Japanese music, which is a welcome change from the usual game fare. The game offers a reasonable variety in the stages—besides the standard running and jumping you also get a couple of shooting levels, a roller-coaster level and an ***Ecco***-style underwater swimming level. The platform part is reasonably interesting and has some good ideas, like the springboards that can be carried around to reach otherwise inaccessible places. There is one thing that I don't understand—why is it that most platform games have you collecting junk? Sonic collects rings, Bubsy collects hairballs (or is it yarnballs, I forgot), etc, etc. Rami is no exception—she collects golden bunnies.

The best thing about the game, as you probably have guessed by now, is the cathartic anti-raccoon violence. You can dispose of the pesky critters by jumping on them, ***Mario***-style, whacking 'em with a huge mallet (my fave), poking at 'em with an umbrella or even shooting 'em full of arrows. Unfortunately, this uplifting experience won't last long, since ***Keio*** is definitely on the short side, which will probably limit its appeal to the general audience. Anime fans, however, will be certain to appreciate the story, the music and the overall presentation of the game. I sincerely hope that the sequel will feature skunks as the main enemies—they are just as bad as raccoons. See you next time, when we press the "play" button once more. ☆

CD Review
The Compact View

*You've seen the anime, now listen to the music! In Japan, animation music is every bit as respected as music from more mainstream soundtracks. **The Compact View** helps you to understand the sometimes confusing world of anime CDs by reviewing the very latest in both domestic and imported releases.*

Music From the Anime TV Series
NEON GENESIS EVANGELION, VOL. II
RELEASED THRU: King Records
LENGTH: 62:57 (25 tracks)
ORDER NO.: KICA-290
PRICE: ¥3000

Although the ***EVANGELION*** CDs have enjoyed great success in Japan—Vol. III, it's said, was the first anime CD to hit No. One on domestic charts since ***GALAXY EXPRESS 999*** in 1979—it may be possible that there's not enough music in the anime TV series itself to fill so many soundtracks. Between the three CDs released to date, there are *nineteen* versions of "Fly Me to the Moon," five of which appear here. Otherwise, Shiro Sagisu continues his '60s and '70s pop influences (see "The Compact View," Vol. 4, No. 2) and series director Anno continues to personally name each track with the often stark honesty of the show as a whole (#9 gets only "Background Music"). You are advised, if at all possible, to seek out the first printing of each soundtrack volume, which contain a slipcover and line art booklet for the same price as the second, which is CD only; be sure to ask about it when ordering.
Carl Gustav Horn

CD Time Capsule
TENKU SENKI SHURATO: TENSEI GENSÔ ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK
LEGEND OF THE HEAVENLY SPHERE SHURATO
RELEASED THRU: King Record Co., LTD.
LENGTH: 39:04 (12 tracks)
ORDER NO.: 276A 7009
PRICE: ¥2843

This soundtrack to the original television series went a long way toward establishing an overall feel for the show. Some of the acoustic overtones and instruments used give an East Indian ambiance to the show about as much as the visuals. Specific tracks will almost certainly bring back memories of different sequences be they action-packed or just character interaction and development. The strength of the opening theme alone ("Shining Soul," included in this disc) was enough to capture the attention of many viewers and keep them coming back for more; the remainder of the album lives up to this standard. Whether a fan of the original television series or just a fan of good music, this soundtrack is a winner. Packed with a subtle level of intensity and emotion this album thrusts you into the heart of the story and action with each listening. It covers all of the BGM through the first thirteen episodes and the majority of it through the first twenty-five.
James Teal

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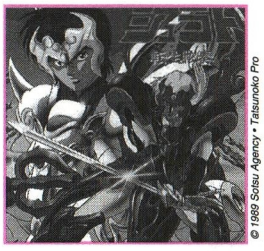

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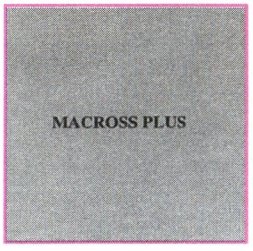


© Macross Plus Production Committee • Bandai Visual

Do-It-Yerself Karaoke
MAISON IKKOKU PARTY ALBUM
RELEASED THRU: Kitty Records
LENGTH: 69:07 (16 tracks total)
ORDER NO.: KTCR-1197
PRICE: ¥2500

This aptly titled CD records a "real" karaoke party at Maison Ikkoku, complete with intrigue (Yotsuya, Ichinose and Akemi stakeout the Manager); misunderstandings (Godai gets caught in a compromising situation involving Kozue and a karaoke CD); even sound F/X from the series (including that wacky barking dog!). Each of the series' main characters takes a turn at the mike, singing opening and ending themes from the anime, and later in the CD you get actual "no vocal" karaoke tracks of those same songs, just perfect for your own sing-along otaku parties. I like to imagine that this is what living at Maison Ikkoku would be like, loud music booming thru the floors, noisy drunken neighbors and all. To me, this was well worth the US$35 or so I paid for it import; you may find that your CD dollars are better spent elsewhere. But if you should happen to have a few bucks lying around....
Trish Ledoux

Music From the OAV Series
MACROSS PLUS ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK: FOR FANS ONLY
RELEASED THRU: Victor Entertainment
LENGTH: 47:58 (13 tracks)
ORDER NO.: VICL 23112
PRICE: ¥4230

Soundtracks I and II of ***MACROSS PLUS*** are domestically available (read: cheap), but I'd guess that this CD probably won't follow suit—it contains few unreleased tracks. There's little new here—a little resequencing with the hauntingly eerie "Santi-U" and "Torch Song"; the cello version of "Myung's Theme" and the piano version of "Nomad Soul"—but these are primarily for the fan who must have everything. Only three tracks aren't available anywhere else—"Dog Fight," the riveting piece heard during the final flight sequence, finally makes an appearance, and the lesser-known but distinctive "Wanna Be an Angel" is the only other new piece worthy of mention. For your hard-earned dollars, the domestic CDs give you more, but ***FANS ONLY*** *does* represent a better balance of orchestral and ethnic tunes in one CD. Plus, the cleverly designed liner booklet is sure to score high points with hardcore otaku.
Dan Okada

The American anime industry has come a long way since the early days of ASTRO BOY. Several U.S.-based companies are making it easier than ever for non-Japanese speaking fans to keep up with their favorite shows. In this section, ANIMERICA takes a look at the best of anime in America.

Here's how the ANIMEICON™ system works: Each icon represents a particular theme peculiar to the anime art form. Those titles deemed to have a fair amount of said theme are indicated by the helpful icons listed below. Whether you're a mecha-head, a fan of the "Girls with Guns" subgenre, or simply a concerned viewer worried about possible nudity, the ANIMEICON™ system will give you the answers you need.

Courtesy Breasts
Brought to you by your favorite animators. (NOTE: Anything with an appearance by ***LUPIN III***'s Fujiko or animated by super otaku production studio Gainax gets an automatic mention.)

ESP
Because a mind is a terrible thing to waste. Includes both the "harmless" variety (***KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD***), as well as the "malignant" strain (David Cronenberg's ***SCANNERS***).

Evil Overlord
Megalomania, anime style. They may not start out intending to take over the world, but they inevitably get around to it.

Idol Singers
WARNING: The Surgeon-General has determined that cutesy pop singers of questionable talent may prove hazardous to your health. Also recognized as a leading cause of tooth decay.

Kung Fu Fightin'
Martial arts from all walks of life—from the zaniness of ***RANMA 1/2*** to the postapocalyptic existential angst of ***FIST OF THE NORTH STAR***.

Masterpiece Theater
Often considered one of the classics of anime; may contain socially redeeming themes disturbing to some viewers.

Mondo Mecha
From spaceships to cyborgs to giant wooden robots. The kind of mechanical devices or "mecha" you'll find only in anime.

Naughty Tentacles
'Nuff said.

Not of This World
Close encounters of a less-than-friendly kind. Invaders come from other dimensions, other worlds, sometimes even the netherworld, but they never come in peace, and they often leave in pieces.

Super Science
Traditional sci-fi gadgets, themes and plot devices, both silly and serious (may include mad scientists).

Ultraviolence
May include severed body parts of indeterminate origin; possibly gratuitous weaponry and/or explosions (the infamous "Girls with Guns" or "Babes with Bazookas" anime subgenre).

Romantic Hijinks
Boy meets girl; boy loses girl; girl comes back with her sisters; the neighbors interfere; etc. Your basic teenage love comedy...with a twist.

Bad Words
More anime in English means more (often gratuitous) !#&@, *@!#, and #*&@. Use caution with younger viewers.

Katsuhiro Otomo, the artist who created the post-apocalyptical punk psychic ***AKIRA***, has struck again with a wickedly funny satire from U.S. Manga Corps. Set in the near future, ***ROUJIN-Z*** poses a very important question. How can a government whose resources are stretched thin by military, social and economic demands cope with a rapidly growing population of aged and infirmed citizens?

The solution is Project Z-001, an experimental hospital bed that provides anything a patient needs. No longer will nurses or care providers have to dote over the "agedly challenged" or "ACHES." The atomic-powered Z-001 feeds, bathes, exercises and entertains its occupant. Once a person becomes a burden to society, he will be strapped into bed and placed, in effect, on a shelf.

This is what happens to Takazawa, an elderly man who becomes the Z-001's first unfortunate occupant. At the beginning of the film, Takazawa spends his days alone in a dismal apartment. Besides the constant drone of the TV, his only contact with the outside world is a young student nurse named Haruko. When officials from the Department of Health whisk Takazawa away, Haruko is the only one who really cares about the old man's well being. She is impressed by what the Z-001 can accomplish, but she is worried that it will rob Takazawa of his dignity.

With the help of three elderly hackers, Haruko attempts to communicate with the super computer that runs Takazawa's bed. At this point, we discover that the Z-001 is not just an aid to the infirmed, but also a sophisticated, mechanized weapon developed by the military. Haruko's meddling causes the computer to adopt the personality of Takazawa's long-dead wife. Soon, the bed breaks out of the hospital and heads for the beach with Takazawa in tow.

The second half of the movie is a madcap chase across Japan. In the giant monster tradition, buildings are destroyed, cars are smashed, and screaming crowds flee in terror. The police fail to stop the runaway bed with bulldozers. In the end, the army's counterpart to Project Z-001 engages the bed in a knockdown, drag 'em out mecha duel. It's all thrilling, flashy and hilarious to watch.

Throughout all this craziness, ***ROUJIN-Z*** lands some well-aimed barbs at our increasingly impersonal society. The scientist who created the bed is only interested in the money that he can generate from the military. The public seems to support Project Z-001 because it won't have to be bothered with taking care of the elderly. Finally, Terada, the bureaucrat in charge of the experiment, views the elderly as mere figures on a balance sheet. To heck with human dignity, Project Z-001 is going to save the government money.

The one beacon of human kindness and unselfishness in the film is Haruko. She risks her life and career by trying to rescue Takazawa. It is her perseverance that convinces Terada that "ACHES" are not faceless numbers, but real people who deserve respect.

Director Hiroyuki Kitakubo (***PATLABOR 1: THE MOVIE***, ***BLACK MAGIC M-66***) animation director Fumio Iida (***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE***) keep ***ROUJIN-Z*** moving at a fast and entertaining pace. The visual designs are very simple and ordinary. Only the bed and the army's mecha, which were designed by Otomo, appear ridiculously out of place. But that's the joke and the message of the film. Of course, a superintelligent hospital bed is an absurd notion. Yet, consider how we treat the elderly now. Is it that absurd to imagine someone developing a device to feed and clean the infirm or take the elderly off our hands? In ***ROUJIN-Z***, Kitakubo, Iida and Otomo show us an absurd world that could be our own.

Michael O'Connell

THE ABASHIRI FAMILY

Creator Go Nagai is the creator of a huge assortment of series, from the weird (***DEVILMAN***) to the wacky (***CUTEY HONEY***) to the wonderful (***MAZINGER Z***). ***THE ABASHIRI FAMILY*** is even more esoteric than most of his other creations. Crimelord Papa Abashiri has been raising his daughter Kikunosuke as a boy to honor a promise he made to his wife shortly before she died: in short, that her innocent feminine side would be preserved (you know...*preserved*), and the Abashiri family curse of looting and killing would be broken. But now Kikunosuke is sixteen, so dad wants to send her to a "proper" and very prestigious boarding school. In typical Go Nagai fashion, "proper" school turns out to be the Boarding School from Hell, and purely coincidentally, the headmaster of the school happens to be an old nemesis of Papa Abashiri. Although the cartoony character designs are interesting to see, the strongest thing going for ***THE ABISHIRI FAMILY*** is its sheer weirdness—but there simply isn't quite enough, in my opinion, to keep the show interesting. ***[MT; VOL. 4, NO. 7] SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 75 MINS.; US$29.95.***

BLUE SEED • VOL. 1

From Yuzo Takada (***3x3 EYES***), ***BLUE SEED*** is in much the same element, peppering a story primarily made up of horror and suspense with dashes of comedy and pathos. Momiji Kushinada is a schoolgirl, born of an ancient family line in Japan—legend has it that their blood was used to seal an ancient race of monsters away. Of course, that's where the current problems come in: the monsters, gigantic plant-based tentacles known as the Aragami, are on the loose again. As long as Momiji is running loose, she presents a threat to them; for if she were to die, her life-force would force the Aragami into an eternal sleep—unless, of course, she were killed under ideal Aragami-supervised conditions. ***BLUE SEED*** is incredibly promising, sporting bright, fluid animation, nifty character designs, great music and a large ensemble cast. ***BLUE SEED*** manages to pull off a gothic horror story (with a twist of punchy comedy) with flair, making the concept of a gigantic plant monster attacking a high school seem that

much less unrealistic. ***[MT; VOL. 4, NO. 7] ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 60 MINS., US$24.95/$29.95.***

BOUNTY DOG

In ***BOUNTY DOG***, the animators use cherished scientific concepts of recent years as throwaway actions in the background of the story—for example, as the hero of ***BOUNTY DOG***, arrives at the spaceport terminal of the moon, we are shown a mass driver launching payloads off the surface just the way Gerard O'Neill and other space enthusiasts described the idea for the process in the late 1970s. One pity in this otherwise intriguing story concerns one of the key concepts in the narrative—the hoary old notion of a giant corporation keeping secret a massive alien presence that had the capability of creating an artificial satellite the size of our moon. From an art direction standpoint, many scenes are dominated by a single color wash. Inside of the lunar city, everything is a monochrome ochre tint. In the bowels of the artificial lunar caverns, everything is tinged with light red, giving the scenes a sort of otherworldly, technological feel, such as in live-action movies like ***ALIEN***. This production isn't going to set any new animation production standards, but it was an enjoyable hour of anime for this science fiction fan.***[GB; VOL. 4, NO. 6] ENGLISH VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 60 MINS.; US$19.95.***

DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO

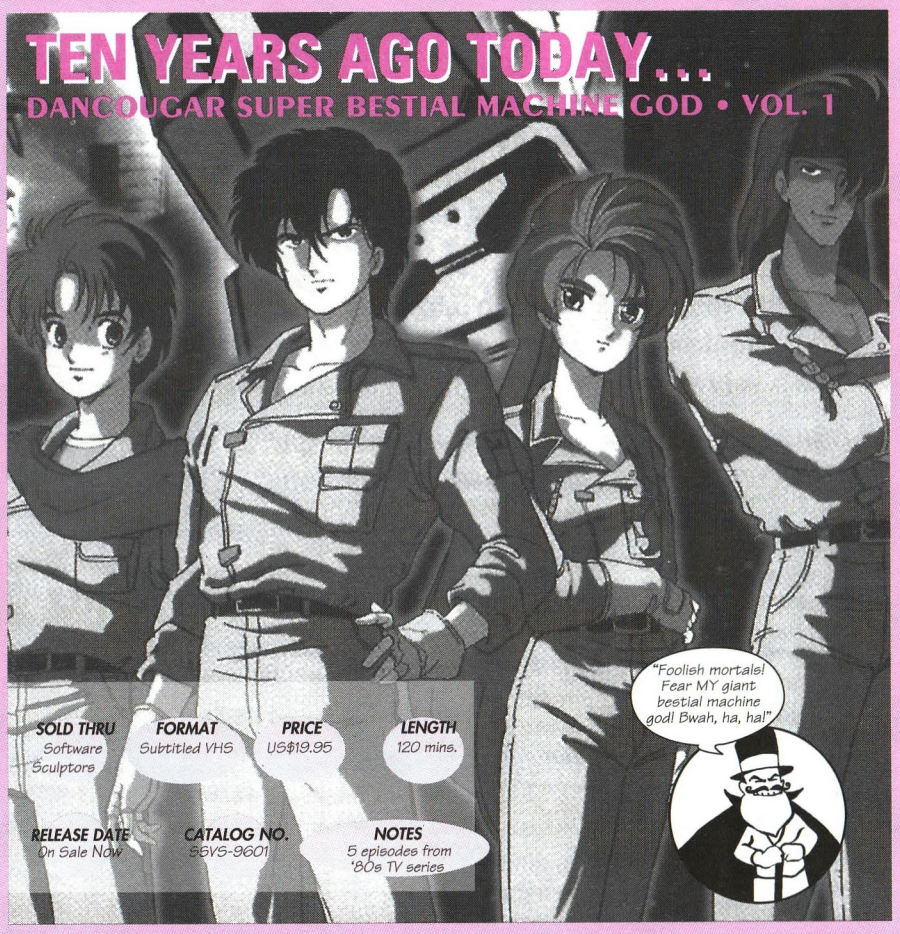
Like ***SAILOR MOON***, ***DHY***'s focus is really on Yohko's personality and everyday life, much more than the demon-hunting stuff. If ***MOON*** takes the route of girl-magazines TEEN or TIGER BEAT (isn't Tuxedo Mask *dreamy*?) then ***YOHKO*** goes the way of SASSY (Yohko's mom presenting her with a pack of condoms, just in case). The addition of more adult content in this context isn't in itself a bad thing—it just makes you realize that in the ***DHY*** universe, those pesky demons'll try stuff they wouldn't *DARE* attempt with Sailor Moon and her fellow Sailor Scouts. The fight scenes are wicked awesome—lots of swords clashing and acrobatic leaps through the air, and even though the animation quality seems more TV-like than OAV, I didn't really care, because I really cared about *Yohko*, and what was happening to her. I'll bet you will too. ***[AK; VOL. 4, NO. 6] ENGLISH VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 50 MINS.; US$19.95.***

GARAGA

GARAGA borrows heavily from such genre classics as ***PLANET OF THE APES***, ***THE TERMINATOR***, ***FLASH GORDON***, and those 1950s thrillers where stranded astronauts have to battle giant gila monsters. With its multiple races and monsters, the planet Garaga recalls the planet Mongo from the ***FLASH GORDON*** serials, overflowing with high-speed chases, explosions and fight scenes. There's even a bad guy who could pass for Ming the Merciless. The animation also draws from other genre sources—technology is similar to the ***ALIEN*** movies and the mecha seem straight out of ***MACROSS***—but what saves the film is the intrigue between the characters. Good guys become bad guys and then change back again. You never know who to like or who to hate, which can be fun. With its fast-paced plot and the interesting interplay between characters, ***GARAGA*** is a passable diversion. ***[MO; VOL. 4, NO. 4] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 100 MINS.; US$29.95.***

GHOST IN THE SHELL

The slogan for the English version of ***GHOST*** is "It found a voice...now it needs a body." The "it" is the "Puppet Master," the ultimate secret agent of the next century, a self-aware program roaming the networks of the world at will. The "body" is that of ***GHOST***'s heroine, Major Motoko Kusanagi, and the Puppet Master whispers to her of a union, a love-making that will give rise to a new form of evolution, a child greater than either humanity or the computers it created. The manga-cute sexiness of creator Masamune Shirow's Kusanagi has been replaced by a pale, pewter flesh and an unblinking countenance, perhaps meant to reflect the lack of essential vitality in even a perfect body in an age where they are but shells, manufactured to order, that one's essential ghost slips in and out of as needed. The voice-acting in the English version is certainly competent; the standout is actually the Puppet Master himself. Both the actor, Abe Lasser, and the dub's sound processing team, manage to make a voice that con-



Remember back in 1986 when the Earth was overrun by robots from the powerful Zorbados Muge Empire? You know, when most of North America was under the control of General Death Gaia and only the Cyber-Beast Force could save us?What? Don't tell me you slept through all that.

If you can't recall any of these strange events, you'd better check out ***DANCOUGAR: SUPER BESTIAL MACHINE GOD*** from Software Sculptors. This 38-episode television series recounts the mid-'80s invasion of Earth by the nasty Muge. In the first episode, Shinobu Fujiwara, Shapiro Keats and Sara Yuki are cadet pilots at the Space Academy in Australia. Shinobu is a brash loner, while Shapiro and Sara are deeply in love. When the aliens strike, the cadets are mobilized to support the regular military. A gifted fighter, Shapiro offers battle suggestions to his superiors. They ignore him, saying he is too young and inexperienced. Enraged, Shapiro decides to defect to the other side with Sara in tow. Fortunately, Shinobu intercedes and prevents Sara from following Shapiro into space. By the end the first battle, nearly all of the Earth's defenses are wiped out. Only a plucky civilian resistance stands between the alien horde and humanity's survival. In Japan, "the world's leader in super-technology," a group of scientists secretly create the "Cyber-Beast Force" to fight the Muge Empire. Four pilots including Shinobu and Sara are chosen to operate the giant Eagle, Cougar, Liger (lion + tiger) and Mammoth battle machines. The new mecha quickly make mincemeat of Muge's forces. With the tide of the war changing, Shapiro provides secret information about Earth's defenses to the aliens. It's not long before the traitorous earthling is chosen by Emperor Muge to lead the invasion forces.

Though ***DANCOUGAR*** may not be a very intellectually stimulating series, it *is* a good, clean mecha melodrama. The wonderfully designed alien robots move with a surprising fluidity for a television series. In contrast, the chunky Cyber-Beasts resemble the Zords from the ***MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS***. The only thing missing is for the four Cyber-Beasts to join together into a single, Dancougar robot. No doubt, this will occur in a future episode.

Software Sculptors is no doubt banking on ***DANCOUGAR***'s appeal to fans of ***MACROSS/ROBOTECH***. With the mecha-battle-in-every-episode pacing and the Earth-under-siege-storyline, the two series are very similar. Minmay enthusiasts should be warned that ***DANCOUGAR*** contains no cutesy idol singers. Of course, some people will consider this a plus. Like ***MACROSS***, ***DANCOUGAR***'s greatest strength can be found in the interplay between characters. Should Sara Yuki join her true love and help the invading aliens? Will Shinobu tell his superiors that Shapiro is a traitor even though it would endanger Sara's position in the CBF? And what of the sinister Shapiro himself? Are his ambitions limited to conquering the Earth or does he dream of controlling the entire universe? Software Sculptors' translation brings out all the nuances of the Shinobu/Sara/Shapiro triangle. In fact, the entire packaging of Dancougar is extremely well done. Rather than stringing out the series at one or two episodes per video, every release contains five episodes. This gives the viewer more than just a taste of what the series is about. Hopefully other companies will adopt this strategy in the packaging of their television series. This multi-episode packaging also makes it easier for people to catch up on recent history.

It's hard to believe that you never heard of the Muge invasion. It was all over TV.

Michael O'Connell

veys mystery, portentousness, and power, without sounding corny. ***[CGH; VOL. 4, NO. 7] ENGLISH VHS/ SUBTITLED VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 81 MINS.; US$19.95/$29.95.***

IRIA: ZEIRAM THE ANIMATION • VOL. 1

I went into ***IRIA*** fearing some kind of ***VIDEO GIRL AI*** meets Boba Fett, and was delightedly surprised to find nothing of the kind. While on the surface, this series appears to subscribe to a slew of stereotypes (feisty heroine who idol-worships her big brother, outwardly tough but good-hearted urchin tagalong, battle against impossible odds) but it doesn't. At every turn ***IRIA*** defeats the obvious to tell a deep, engrossing tale. The action is exciting, the story totally absorbing, and each character is believable, some very engaging. Iria is a three-dimensional woman—daring, athletic, evidently practiced and clever—the flaw that lends her realism is her inexperience—a welcome change from the average anime female, who trades winsome eye-batting for hopeless whining inadequacy or over-emotional naiveté. The program has a swashbuckling, ***STAR WARS*** feel but a real well of humanity underneath. Inventively written by the original creator/director of the live-action ***ZEIRAM***, Keita Amemiya and directed by Tetsuro Amino (***MACROSS 7***), ***IRIA*** is glowingly memorable and alive. ***[RM; VOL. 4, NO. 6] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 60 MINS.; US$29.95.***

MAPS 1 & 2

The alien cyborg Lipumira is the one element that saves ***MAPS*** from becoming ***TENCHI!*** in outer space. On the surface, she seems to be just another beautiful space bimbo, designed to titillate adolescent males. But at the core of Lipumira's character exists a compelling complexity. She feels guilt over the death of her creator, Calion. This drives her to defy the Mystic Ones and hunt for the Star Map. It also puts her in conflict with the Ghost Ships of her five sisters. She is alone except for Earthlings Gen and Hoshimi. Yet, her half organic/half mechanical body prevents her ever being truly close to them. Above all the other characters in the series, Lipumira is the most sympathetic. Whenever the story focuses on her, ***MAPS*** shines. ***[MO; VOL. 4, NO. 4] SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 60 MINS.; US$29.95.***

MIGHTY SPACE MINERS

"Hard" science fiction is a rare commodity in the anime world. If your tastes run towards Asimov, Clarke or Heinlein, then ***MIGHTY SPACE MINERS*** is the right show for you. It doesn't have ugly gelatinous alien life forms, zero-gee shower scenes or string bikini-clad phaser-toting amazons, but it's got a story that doesn't insult the viewer's intelligence, quality animation and proof that you don't need incessant laser blasts or detailed decapitations to generate suspense. An attempt to disarm an ancient killer satellite goes very wrong, resulting in a nuclear explosion that sets an asteroid on a collision course with Earth. From the rotating habitat ring to remote controlled repairs to cargo hauling, everything has been presented with meticulous attention to detail. Give ***SPACE MINERS*** a try—this video is definitely worth the money. ***[TT; VOL. 4, NO. 5] ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 60 MINS.; US$24.95/$34.95.***

NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD

On the surface, ***NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD*** appears to be a typical children's fantasy populated by anthropomorphic cats. In reality, this is a serious drama which addresses such adult themes as loss, sacrifice, salvation and the necessity of hope. In order to show just how awful and devoid of hope young Giovanni's life is, the video presents a world that is oppressive and very often unbearable to watch, but the wonders that await in the second half of the film greatly outweigh these initial plodding moments. The galactic train itself is rather an ordinary looking steam engine, which, in the end, makes the unusual aspects of the journey so much more unsettling. Through the train's windows, the travelers watch as rivers of stars transform into fields of glowing flowers. Constellations like Scorpio and Cygnus come magically to life. In one of the film's most powerful sequences, Giovanni and Campanella gaze in horror as hundreds die when an ocean liner sinks. After this, the pair accompany the disaster's victims to their heavenly reward. For a few hours, ***NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD*** can take the faithful viewer on a voyage across the stars and to heaven and back. For a few hours, at least, it can help up find hope in a mundane world. ***[MO; VOL. 4, NO. 7] SUBTITLED VHS FROM CENTRAL PARK MEDIA; 115 MINS.; US$29.95.***

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The best way to describe ***SPIRIT OF WONDER*** is to call it a fairy tale that is not quite a fairy tale. It doesn't have knights in shining armor, princesses, or magic wands the way a "typical" fairy tale has. But what ***SPIRIT OF WONDER*** *does* do is attempt to recreate the general atmosphere—the sense of the impossible being made possible—no matter how outlandish it might seem.

Instead of the fairy-tale princess, we have Miss China, a young woman who owns a pub called Tenkai. Instead of magic, we have Miss China's marital arts, in addition to some "weird science," courtesy of the Einstein-like, hair-in-disarray inventor Dr. Breckenridge. We have a light touch of the romantic element with the handsome Jim, Dr. Breckenridge's assistant. And as for the impossible, how about going to the moon? (And I don't mean in a spaceship....)

The story begins with Miss China trying to collect the rent from Dr. Breckenridge, who is an inventor with big, big dreams, but no money to pay for them. The dear Doctor's excuse for not forking over the cash is that he has just invented a device (this is the nineteenth century, mind you) that will allow people to go to the moon, and he'll be able to pay the rent as soon as he gets a sponsor. Of course, there is the small problem of trying to convince people that it actually works....

From that point on, the story ***SPIRIT*** takes off at its own leisurely pace. In a way, this is one of the video's problems; sometimes it moves *too* leisurely. Don't expect ***SPIRIT*** to use slapstick humor or fast-paced action to yank viewers back to attention—there are a few jokes here and there (with a light touch of the martial arts), but scenes involving them are few and far between (I found myself getting a little bored at times). If you're looking for a solid action or comedy flick, ***SPIRIT*** might not be for you. The characters are mostly rather "stock"—the eccentric inventor, his enthusiastic assistant, the Chinese martial artist—but they do have a few quirks to distinguish them a little from the norm. For example, Miss China is quite capable of kicking through nice solid wooden doors. (Eat your heart out, Chun Li.) These characters *are* likable...I liked them very much. But still, quirks alone do not develop characters, and they don't really undergo any major changes in this one-shot video.

However, these "weak points" of ***SPIRIT*** are also some of its *strongest* points as well. ***SPIRIT*** is *supposed* to offer something new from the run-of-the-mill action or comedy video. And it does; what develops is a kind of lighthearted, fairy-tale charm—a trait which I don't find often in a lot of the translated anime available, and a very welcome change. The tone of the story is quite lighthearted; narration is interspersed throughout the plot, adding to the "storytelling" feel. Another strong point of ***SPIRIT OF WONDER*** is that it's "safe," in the sense that there are no sex scenes, no nudity, no blood or guts. This quality makes it a good candidate to consider for those who are just getting introduced to Japanese animation. (A few things that Dr. Breckenridge does to China could be called harassment, but at least it's not used as a *constant* plot device.) In addition, the character designs in ***SPIRIT OF WONDER*** are a real standout (even if Miss China does bear a passing resemblance to a certain other female martial artist with the same hairstyle). The character designs are a little more "real" than what is usual for anime, mostly in that the noses aren't as angular, and are larger than what I'm used to seeing on a typical anime character's face. This art style might not be liked by some, but it does help in adding a little more personality to the designs.

Overall, take all this and keep in mind what ***SPIRIT*** is not. Yes, maybe viewers used to action and nonstop comedy will find this video a little boring. But ***SPIRIT OF WONDER*** is a nice, charming fairy tale, and sometimes, it's nice to have a change.

Dawn Nakamura

PATLABOR 1: THE MOVIE

PATLABOR is an intelligent, visually impressive thriller that also includes enough cool hardware to hold the interest of the most hardcore mecha fan. Set in metropolitan Tokyo circa 1999, industrial robots known as "labors" are used for construction, but when the human operators of these giant robots use them for evil or mischief, you need police robots to sort them out. Tokyo's mobile police use patrol labors—"patlabors" for short—to deal with labor crimes. Robot fans will find that the opening and closing segments of the movie more than justify the price of admission, but be warned that you'll be exposed to unexpectedly high doses of humor, intrigue and rumination in between. A word of warning: the subtitled version is consistently funnier, clearer and more interesting than the English rendition. ***[MK; VOL. 4, NO. 5] ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 118 MINS.; US$19.95/$24.95.***

RANMA 1/2: AN AKANE TO REMEMBER

It seems to me that the real central character of ***RANMA 1/2***, the one who is characterized in depth and through whose eyes events are seen, is Akane, Ranma's nominal fiancee. She has her quirks and flaws (jealous, quick to anger...) but she is also the one relatively normal character in a crowd of eccentrics. The OAV stories are mostly about Akane and her relationship with Ranma (like ***LOIS AND CLARK***, in a way—a love triangle with two people, as the saying goes). ***AN AKANE TO REMEMBER*** is a satisfyingly complete little story, combining the usual knockabout comedy with a touch of sweetness and a dash of sadness, making it more poignant than most ***RANMA*** adventures. The romance of a sort that develops between Akane and the forgetful forest boy Shinnosuke bring her and Ranma closer than ever to admitting their feelings for each other by the time it's done. ***[DD; VOL. 4, NO. 5] ENGLISH VHS FROM VIZ VIDEO; 65 MINS.; US$29.95.***

RANMA 1/2: ONE GREW OVER THE KUNO'S NEST

In the ***RANMA*** "movie" that opens the tape, ***"Team Ranma vs. the Legendary Phoenix,"*** the incurably clueless Kuno buys a Phoenix egg in the belief it will make him invincible. Instead, it gets him one very goofy-looking chick permanently perched on his head. The Phoenix then grows to monstrous size and tears up a good portion of the neighborhood. Trouble spots: in one scene, the word *surikomi* ("imprinting") was emphasized for punning references in Japanese which have no relationship in English. The English dialogue comes up with some admirable equivalents, but the result still sorta leaves the impression that something isn't quite coming across. Also, viewers may be a bit disoriented by the haphazard subtitling of signs. In the second episode, the ***RANMA*** gang visits a cave infested with ghosties and ghoulies of the Japanese sort, all apparently determined to bust up any happy couples they come across. Minor quibbles aside, ***ONE GREW OVER THE KUNO'S NEST*** is more funny stuff in the grand ***RANMA 1/2*** tradition. ***[DD; VOL. 4, NO. 6] ENGLISH VHS FROM VIZ VIDEO; 65 MINS.; US$29.95.***

THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER

The character designs for ***THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER*** are rich and attractive, the backgrounds are ambitiously detailed when it comes to showing the series' globe-trotting scenes set in turn-of-the-century Paris; in the jungle on an isolated island or aboard the fabled deep-sea submarine *Nautilus*. Yes, the show does draw inspiration from the Jules Verne story ***20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA***, but, like many anime inspired by classic literature, there is no real attempt to stick to the original story. Instead, ***NADIA*** draws flavor and a sense of place from the Verne story, and goes on to create its own world. In some ways, ***THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER*** is even more ambitious in scope than its source material, blending in contemporary science fiction and mythological themes. ***[GB; VOL. 4, NO. 5] ENGLISH VHS FROM ORION HOME VIDEO/STREAMLINE PICTURES; 94 MINS. EACH; US$14.98 EACH.***

REVIEWERS: *[AK]* ***Angeline Kim****; [GB]* ***Greg Barr****; [CGH]* ***Carl Gustav Horn****; [MO]* ***Michael O'Connell****; [DD]* ***Dwight Decker****; [TT]* ***Ted Thomas****; [MK]* ***Mark Simmons****; [RM]* ***Robin MacNamara****; [MT]* ***Michael Toole***.

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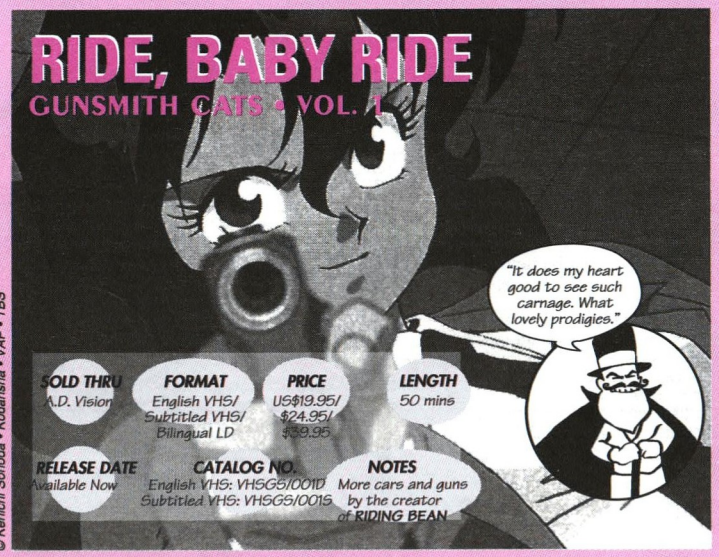


Readers of the ***GUNSMITH CATS*** manga by Kenichi Sonoda should be quite at home with the background and story's parameters. Those who have never read the comics or even seen the ***RIDING BEAN*** OAV might have a few questions however, such as who are the Gunsmith Cats?

Rally Vincent is a gun-totin', wheel-spinnin', sharp-shootin', fast-drivin' bounty hunter. Owns a gun shop named (surprise!) Gunsmith Cats. This serves as her regular source of income when she's not out rounding up the bad guys for even more cash. She also services, maintains and modifies the weapons of her customers and offers much useful advice for their continued ballistic enjoyment. Most of her money seems to get tied up with paying for repairing the damage done to her car (a Shelby Cobra GT500 that strikes an uncanny resemblance to the one "Percy" drove in ***RIDING BEAN***—different license plate though. Does Sonoda own one of these cars or what?) incurred during high-speed pursuit. Cars, guns and ammunition...she knows them all. "Minnie" May Hopkins is an overworked, underpaid, underaged and oversexed demolitions expert. She just loves explosives. Plastique, smoke grenades, flash grenades, improvised explosives, C-4, anything with a bang gets her attention. She assists Rally on most cases despite Rally's stern insistence otherwise. In the manga it was stated that May used to work as a prostitute, but so far her adventures in the video realm have been decidedly less risque. Becky Farah serves as a contracted informant. Rally gets many of her leads on the bail jumpers and other bounties from Becky (though she can never seem to pay her on time). As good as Becky is at finding information, it's surprising that she isn't an investigative reporter or private detective herself. Becky is their tracker, business associate and friend, but she is sick to death of Rally always ordering pizza and May getting Chinese takeout (the only thing the fridge is well stocked with is C-4).

Basically between the three of them they manage to get into and out of a great deal of trouble with fair regularity. Whether it's at a stakeout, on the road or in their own booby-trapped house, seldom will a day go by without some form of fairly pyrotechnic entertainment. Even their house is booby-trapped rather than alarmed so that Rally and May can at least have a little fun with any would-be trespassers. The wealth of gun, bomb and driving tricks that the pair dream up is nothing short of phenomenal.

The pacing of the first episode is rather reminiscent of ***RIDING BEAN***. You see the characters at work, then at rest, they get suckered into the the story, there's a plot twist and then a finale. In this case they capture Jonathan Washington (jailbreak and gun runner, he winds up as the designated victim targeted by the Gunsmith Cats for bounty. Almost likable in a hopeless sort of way, it appears that he will be a continuing character, poor sap), find out about his connection with some gun runners and then get dragged into further involvement by Bill Collins (federal agent working for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, he is not above blackmail, but despite his questionable methods proves to be rather competent in his own right—slimy, but useful). The action and BGM are fast paced but not so much as a roller coaster that ***RIDING BEAN*** was.

The video does assume that viewers already have some limited idea as to who the characters are (thus the above descriptions, for your benefit), but on the whole it is a coherently fun trip. The English version's voice-casting was fine, but the direction suggested a focus on clear pronunciation and enunciation rather than a realistic, natural conversational tone between the characters—I'd be curious to see the subtitled version to see how the directing styles contrast. Scripting and dialogue kept true with the feel of the characters and the situations that they found themselves confronting.

Fans of ***RIDING BEAN*** and Sonoda's ***GUNSMITH CATS*** manga should definitely check out this series. In the long run it should prove to be full of fast-paced, action-packed, and sometimes violent amusement. The animation quality is solid, as is the sound work. For those of you who are wondering "why take this guy's advice," well, I collect Sonoda's manga and have watched the subtitled ***RIDING BEAN*** to death. From that perspective, so far the first video doesn't *quite* meet up to the expectations that I had developed (well, big shoes to fill), but I look forward to future episodes to see if the producers can rise to the challenge.

James Teal

Get Connected!

HOW TO ORDER

All of the videos reviewed this month are available directly from their U.S. production companies. Please note that in most cases orders made with personal checks are shipped when checks clear; MC/Visa is the simplest way to pay. In the meantime, be sure to tell them Animerica *sent you!*

DANCOUGAR
Call 1.212.245.9559 or write to: SOFTWARE SCULPTORS • 250 WEST 57TH STREET, SUITE 326 • NEW YORK, NY 10107.

GUNSMITH CATS
Call 713.977.9181 for ordering information, or write to A.D. VISION • 5750 BINTLIFF, #217 • HOUSTON, TX 77036-2123

ROUJIN-Z
Call 1.800.626.4277 for ordering information or write to: U.S. MANGA CORPS • 250 WEST 57TH ST., STE. 317 • NEW YORK, NY 10107

SPIRIT OF WONDER
Call 1.800.242.6463 for ordering information or write to: ANIMEIGO • P.O. BOX 989 • WILMINGTON, NC 28402-0989.

Letters from Our Readers

ANIMESSAGES

SLAM EVIL

FAST-FORWARD TO THE NUDE SCENES

Dear ANIMERICA,

I just love your magazine. It's pretty cool. I really enjoyed that feature you did on (I hope I get this right) Buichi Terasawa. I used to think that he only did ***COBRA***. I think it's pretty cool how Trish was the model for all those "butt shots." [*That's just a scandalous rumor!—Ed.*] Anyway, I just have to compliment you guys on your ***X/1999*** manga feature. It was made just the way I like my manga—dark, dreary and awesome!

I'm writing to you guys because I can't talk to my friends about "Japanimation." Sure, most of my friends like it and all, but none of them care for the story in it, all they want to see is the gory violence and occasional profanity and nudity. I tried to show them ones with story like ***MACROSS PLUS*** but they tell me, "Fast forward to the nude scenes." (What a bunch of perverts, right?) Being lonely as I am, I started my hobby in the sixth grade, and a lot of kids thought I was crazy. Even today, my mom wants me to get a new hobby. My family (who're a bunch of puritans, but they're cool) says that I won't learn a thing watching that "smut." Actually, I learned how to draw and write creatively, and when given enough time, I could draw a mural. Before I go, I'd like to ask you a question: How come you guys said that there's sex in ***DEMON CITY SHINJUKU***? I have that movie and there's nothing bad in it.

Your faithful fan until I (or you) die,

Philippe Chan
Folsom, CA

*We said there was sex in **DEMON CITY SHINJUKU**? Hmmm...unfortunately, you didn't mention WHERE, but I'd guess maybe in our "Best of the West" review, where it was mentioned that it had "less sex" than **WICKED CITY**, another Yoshiaki Kawajiri-directed work—which is fair, if you count the bit where "Mephisto" gets bent over the bar by that snake-woman as sex. Close call, we'd say...otherwise, thanks for the kudos, and we're glad you're enjoying **X/1999**. Yes, folks, shôjo manga isn't always hearts and flowers!*

IMAGINE OWNING COOL ANIME CDs

Dear Trish,

Only recently, I've become a huge fan of Japanese animation. I say recently because it's only been last year that I saw my first one. It was ***RANMA 1/2*** the TV series, and I've been collecting ever since. I also wanted to let you know that Vol. 4, No. 6 is my first issue of ANIMERICA and I love it! So I just signed up for a two-year subscription.

I started flipping through and something grabbed my attention. There were soundtracks available for the videos I love so much! Imagine, owning a ***RANMA 1/2*** CD with all of those cool theme songs! Please answer a question for me. How can I find out where to order them? I know they don't sell them at the local music store or where I would see them. It doesn't really matter about the price. I just want to own some of them.

Also, I love the ***CRYING FREEMAN*** videos. Could you tell me if there is a CD for the ***CRYING FREEMAN*** series? I heard the ending song in the third video—I think it's called ***SHADES OF DEATH***. The song was in Japanese, and it was so pretty that the song was in my head for weeks. I can't think of the name of the singer, but the name of the song is "Close Your Eyes." I was disappointed that the words were not displayed on the bottom of the screen like they usually are when the song is in Japanese. I didn't have the slightest idea of where to begin looking to find the words. Now that I know it might be on a CD, I don't have to ruin my movie listening to it repeatedly. Thanks for reading.

A fan till the end

Dionne Goree
Philadelphia, PA

*For anime CDs, check our advertisers in this magazine—most of them will do special orders straight from Japan, and mail your purchase right to wherever you may be. Just make a few calls, explain your need, and your wishes should be fulfilled in no time! On the **RANMA 1/2** CD front, we're not saying for sure yet, but keep your fingers crossed for a domestic **RANMA 1/2** CD to be released sometime in the not-so-distant future! Keep your eyes on these pages for news as it develops!*

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE DOG!?

Dear Trish,

I know you must get tons of mail a day containing some pretty inane questions, and it must vex you a great deal to read them, and I hate having to do this to you, but I have a pretty stupid question for you.

I have watched ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** three times. The first time, I noticed a beagle that showed up twice in the film—once in a commerical in the trash collector's home and in his photograph. The second time, I also noticed the beagle on the bridge as the Major went through the city. The third time I spotted this precocious pooch in several posters on a wall during the beginning of the chase scene with the guy wearing the Therm-optic trench coat.

Now I know this is going to sound real stupid, but does the beagle have any significant meaning in the movie? I mean, does Masamune Shirow have a pet beagle, or is it maybe one of the animators' dogs, or is there something in the manga having to do with this annoying little dog, or is he just there because someone likes dogs? I know this sounds psychotic, but please clue me in.

Sincerely,

Robert Evans
Camden, NJ

As this month's Convention report should prove, you're not the only one to wonder where that darn dog came from. Now you know. Now, would YOU be interested in a Mamoru Oshii movie about basset hounds...?

SAILOR MOON VIDEO GAMES?

Dear ANIMERICA,

I love your magazine, it's fantastic. I have always loved Japanese animation—even when I never knew much about it, I just watched it and appreciated its great animation and imagination. I wanted to really get involved and learn more about Japanese animation after watching the ***RONIN WARRIORS***...then came ***SAILOR MOON***, and this was the most fantastic cartoon I have ever seen. I do understand that this show is directed at young people, but I still love it, and I'm a 16-year-old guy. Also, since ***SAILOR MOON*** is a big hit in the U.S., will the Japanese Super Famicom ***Sailor Moon*** games be coming to the United States too? I found out about your magazine when I bought ***Ranma 1/2*** for my Super Nintendo, now I am a subscriber and I have one thing to say...I'm home.

Thank you for your time! Sincerely,

Kramer Darr
Boron, CA

*Any other fans out there who'd like to see a domestic **Sailor Moon** video game? Hey, you want results, you know what to do—write to your favorite game producers and say, "Hey, give me a **Sailor Moon** game, and I'll buy it!" If we hear anything about a domestic release, we'll be sure to let you know.*

BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN

Dear Trish,

Anata wa ikaga desu ka? I want to commend you and your staff on one of the finest mags in the biz today. I have been into animation since the days of ***GIGANTOR***, ***SPEED RACER*** and...well, for a long time.

About a year and a half ago, I had to install some drivers for QuickTime format video on a PC at the studio where I work and it just so happened that it was on a sub directory of a CD ROM. ***RANMA 1/2*** was the title, and just watching the screensaver got me laughing. I had to go and buy the first in the TV series. Needless to say, I have become a full-blown otaku, and a ***RANMA 1/2*** fiend (I swear the Viz Shop-By-Mail order-takers know me by name). I was reading one of the wonderful translations that you did for the collector's series liner notes and it got me to thinking. This woman has endured so much to obtain her ability to speak, read, and write Japanese, and such an ancient culture has much to enjoy. Because of your indirect influence I have gone back to watching anime (yeah, buddy, so what if I'm 42) and have been fully immersed in my study of Japanese. I can pretty much enjoy my anime without having to read the translations. Now I know why you referred to Ranma as a potty mouth!

Sincerely,

Gilbert Sandoval
Ponoma, CA

MORE AND MORE

Dear ANIMERICA,

First of all I would like to formally compliment your magazine. It is laid out as through you actually like Japanese animation. As strange as that may sound, I have heard a slough of bad coverage in various other forms of media. Secondly, a belated congratulations to Trish Ledoux (whose eyes I hope trace these words) on ***THE COMPLETE ANIME GUIDE***. Best wishes and hopes for many further volumes. I do not currently subscribe to ANIMERICA, although I intend to subscribe by the end of the month. I do have a dire thing to ask of Trish and Viz. Get ***SONIC THE HEDGEHOG*** if at all possible! Also, I have great respect for your "viewer's choice" policy in subtitled and dubbed works. When will ***FATAL FURY*** have a subtitle?

It is nice to finally see anime become even slightly dominant enough to broadcast on TV. When I heard about ***DRAGON BALL Z*** coming to the airwaves I was truly surprised. I am a six-year student of Japanese and know the series fairly well, but I had never seen the first season. Is there any chance, with ***DRAGON BALL***'s really early time slot (reminiscent of ***DRAGON WARRIOR***), that it will go on? Nevermind the violent content.

Finally, is there a series that Megumi Hayashibara isn't in? She has the widest voice range I have ever heard in a girl. From grumbling "Ranma-chan" to the squeaky "Lina" in ***SLAYERS*** and "Nuku-Nuku."

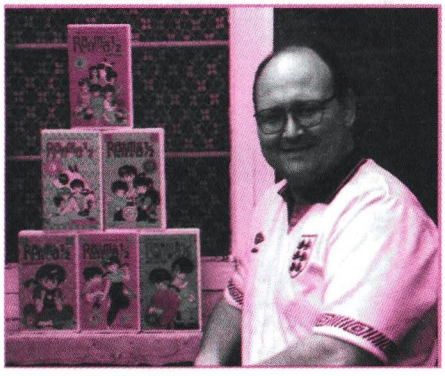
Keep up the great work!

RECEIVED VIA INTERNET

*Look to future issues for more on the English adaptation of **DRAGON BALL Z**, including interviews with the voice-actors, and more! As for Megumi—she's in a lot of stuff, definitely. We're not going to launch into a list of roles (too many!), but if you like Megumi, you can currently see her strutting her stuff—aside from the above-mentioned titles—in her typical cute/heroic form in **BLUE SEED**, and in a real surprise cast-against-type in **EVANGELION**.*

MY PRIZE AND I

Prizes, prizes, prizes...we love to give 'em, and folks love to get 'em! Here's a mini-gallery of some of the prize winners in this year's "It's an ANIMERICA Christmas!" contest. If you've won a prize from us, and would like to see yourself pictured in these pages, send in a photo (preferably against a plain white background) to "My Prize and I" at our mailing address listed below. Look to future issues for more contests, and more prizes!



RANMA FINALLY MAKES IT TO THE U.K.
***Philip Turvey** of **South Yorkshire, England** and his complete set of the **RANMA 1/2 Subtitled Collector's Edition**!*

MEOW FROM FLORIDA
***Juliet Antipolo** of **Jacksonville, FL** and her complete set of **ALL-PURPOSE CULTURAL CAT GIRL NUKU-NUKU**!*

SAILING WITH NUKU-NUKU
***Alysia Mountain** of **Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada** poses with another set of **ALL-PURPOSE CULTURAL CAT GIRL NUKU-NUKU** on the Habriola Island Ferry!*

ANIMERICA GAFFE SQUAD!

Well, folks, the convention season is finally winding down, but it's taken its toll on your poor editors. Before you all get too crazy with postcards pointing out errors we made in our exhausted state, we're gonna hand out the next few awards with the last of our energy, and then the woodshed will be closed for the next month or so. We're too tired even to cane the guilty. EMBARGO ON!

*Yes, we know—Christopher Franke of Tangerine Dream scored the new music for the **TENCHI MUYÔ!** movie, **TENCHI IN LOVE**, and not the **ARMITAGE III** feature. What can we say? We're tired. Nobody caught it before we did, though, so just mark it down in the record book, and let's move along. **Brock Moses** of **Trinity, AL** points out that **STREET FIGHTER II**'s Guile (Anime Feature, Vol. 4, No. 5) is a **U.S. Air Force Major**, not a **U.S. Army Colonel**. Yeah, sure in the GAME, but is it OUR fault that in the live-action movie they kept saying "Colonel Guile, Colonel Guile" until we couldn't get it out of our heads? Chalk it up to our love for the "Muscles from Brussels." In the same issue, a big "whoopsie" for **Yota (VIDEO GIRL AI)** (Manga Close-Up) who does not, in fact, "laugh at the ground" frequently or have a **DRAGON BALL** haircut, but **Junta (DNA^2)** does. **Soung Lee** of **Bakersfield, CA** collects. (In other news, **"ZEIRAM: IRIA THE ANIMATION"** is, without a doubt, a typo. Read the below notice about typos. And did I mention we're TIRED?)*

*Spot a boo-boo in the latest issue of ANIMERICA? Don't waste time wringing your hands in confusion, tell us about it! If you spot a legitimate factual error somewhere in the magazine (typos and "style" questions such as "Takahashi Rumiko" instead of "Rumiko Takahashi" win no prizes, folks. The gods do not smile on fussbudgets and nitpickers), and you're the **FIRST** person to send in a regular-sized postcard about it, you'll join the ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad, entitling you to a special prize...maybe. Send postcards to: **ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad**, c/o Viz Communications, Inc. • P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107.*

WINNERS, WINNERS, WE'VE GOT WINNERS!

Three lucky **ANIMERICA** readers have been selected from all completed reader response polls postmarked during **June '96** to receive a special prize. Here they are:

Nancy Phjong • Alhambra, CA
Thomas Ishii • Jacksonville, FL
Jeff Green • Ventura, CA

Congratulations! All three of you win a copy of **"DHARMA CHAMELEON,"** the third and latest volume in the new **RANMA 1/2 HARD BATTLE** series! If your name wasn't picked this time, don't worry, because we'll be randomly drawing a whole new batch of winners each and every issue, so be sure to send in your readers' response card without delay. Good luck, Animericans!

*ANIMERICA welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to: **Letters to the Editor, c/o Viz Communications • P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107**, or via the Internet to viz@netcom.com. We are unable to answer letters individually. Concise, typed letters have the best chance of being published. We reserve the right to edit for space or clarity.*

Steve Pearl's ANIME CONVENTION CALENDAR

When writing cons, always include a SASE to ensure a response. Please remember that con infomation can change rapidly, especially as the con dates move closer. Cons which don't have many guests listed usually confirm them closer to the con, so keep that in mind when scheduling your con season itinerary. All conventions are interested in making their event the best they can, so feel free to write them with suggestions and comments.
Steve Pearl

SEPTEMBER 1996
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CALL: (415) 522-3838
E-MAIL: geomancer@earthlink.net
WEB SITE: http://home.earthlink.net/~geomancer/

NOVEMBER 1996
ANIME WEEKEND ATLANTA • 1-3 NOVEMBER
LOCATION: Holiday Inn Airport South
GUESTS: Bruce Lewis, Bill Mayo, Neil Nadelman
MEMBERSHIP RATES: US$25.00 pre-registered before 1 October; $30.00 at the door.
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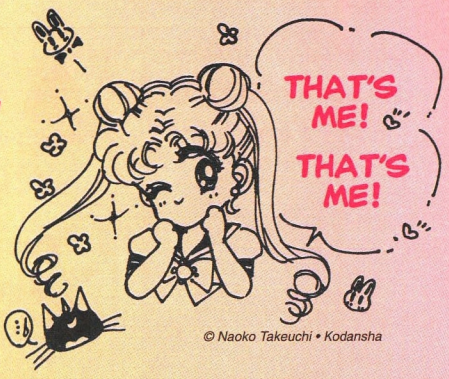
ADDRESS: Anime Weekend Atlanta, P.O. Box 13544 • Atlanta, GA 30324-0544
CALL: (404) 364-9773
E-MAIL: awaadmin@peach.america.net
WEB SITE: http://www.ticllc.net/~idlewild/awa.

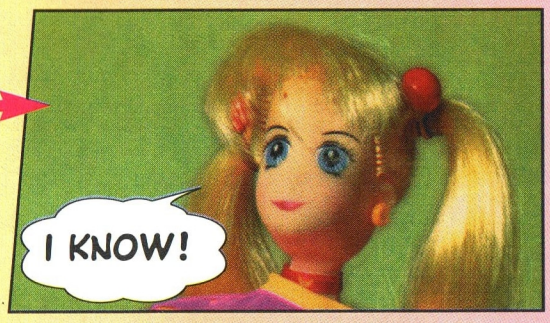
ANIME FEST • 1-3 NOVEMBER
LOCATION: Clarion Hotel Dallas
GUESTS: TBA
MEMBERSHIP RATES: US$15.00 before 4 June; TBA at the door.
HOTEL PRICES: TBA
ADDRESS: AnimeFEST! 96 • P.O. Box 683 • Dallas, TX 76095
CALL: (817) 571-1900
E-MAIL: animfest@spindle.net
WEB SITE: http://members.aol.com/briarios.

*Do we love these toys, or what? Pictured above are the 6" Deluxe **SAILOR MOON** "Adventure Dolls," but we personally adore the 11" dolls, which can be easily dressed in clothes made for Barbie™ (but not her shoes—Sailor Moon's got big feet). Anyway, if you can't find Moon and her friends in your area, let your retailer know you want them! Supply and demand is the law of the business jungle, folks! Check your local toy retailer for more information.*

SAILOR MOON IN "MALL MADNESS"



© Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha



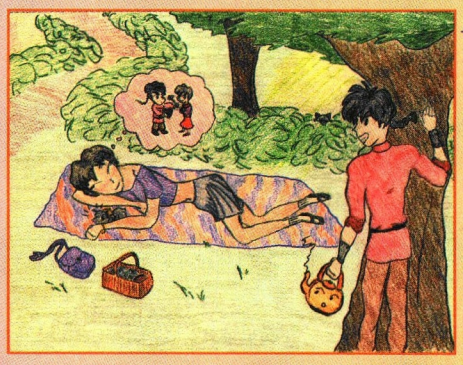
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE!

SAILOR MOON characters © Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • Toei Animation
SAILOR MOON "Adventure Dolls" © Bandai America, Inc.

I'LL PLAY BASE-BALL INSTEAD! BATTER UP!
THE LAST TIME YOU PLAYED BALL, YOU GOT HIT ON THE HEAD AND CRIED FOR AN HOUR! FACE IT, SERENA, YOU'RE JUST NOT THE SPORTING TYPE!
WELL, IF THAT'S HOW IT IS...
...I'LL JUST HAVE TO GO SHOPPING INSTEAD! TO THE MALL!
MAYBE I SHOULD LOOK FOR A WEDDING DRESS...
OH, I GIVE UP...
THE END!
NEXT TIME: SAILOR MOON (AND FRIENDS!) IN "PAJAMA PARTY"

Animerica Fan Art Gallery

MORE NAPS IN THE SUN



Christina Rogers • Remington, VA • Age 15

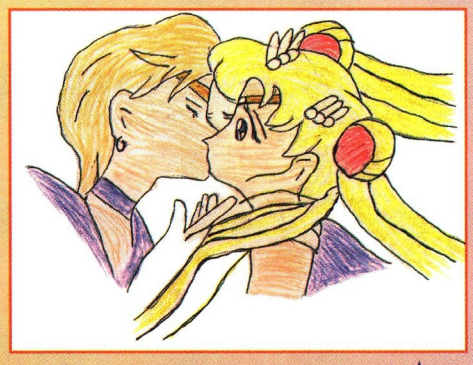
Lisa Betton • Silverdale, WA • Age 11

Alisa Farrington • Columbus, GA • Age 14

MORE KISSES

Meredith Laver • Encinitas, CA • Age 13

Kathie Soto • Waldorf, MD • Age 15

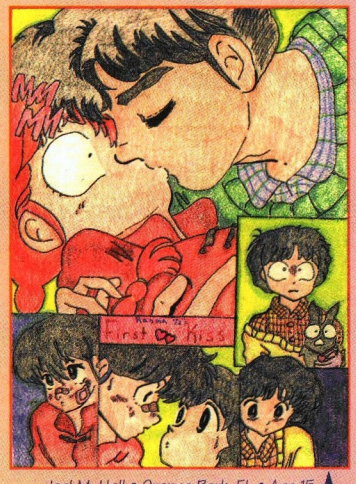


May Roberts • Sylmar, CA • Age 14

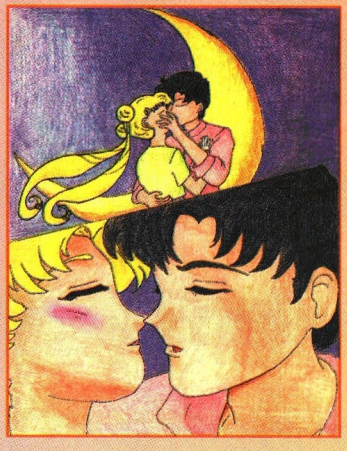
Nica McMillian • Oakland, CA • Age 13

Mona Lisa Tumbaga • San Pascual, Batanga, Philippines • Age 15

Jak Miranda • Bacoor, Cavite, Philippines • Age 23

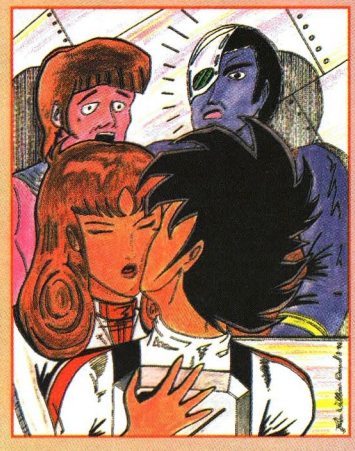


Joel M. Hall • Orange Park, FL • Age 15



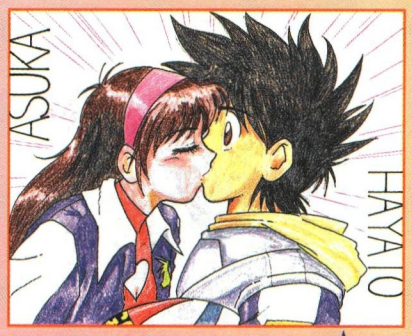
Laura Feeney • Middletown, NY • Age 19

Lily Huon • Carson, CA • Age ?

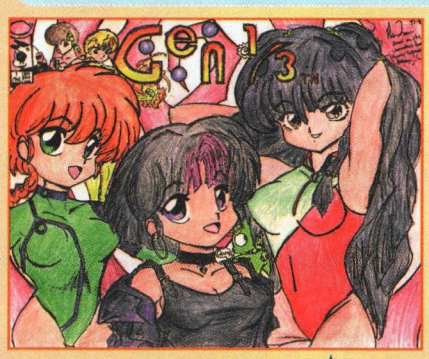


John William Doud • Salt Lake City, UT • Age 20

ANYTHING-GOES ART



Reimpei Kato • Fairport, NY • Age 12



Peter Tran • Palacios, TX • Age 16

Xai Lee • St. Paul, MN • Age 14

Jason Joslin • Derry, NH • Age ?

Sid Babin • Houma, LA • Age ?

Celena Yussen • E. McKeesport, PA • Age 15

Shahren bin Ghani • Brunei Darussalam • Age 16

Nachy Sam • Hamilton, Ontario, Canada • Age 15

Phillip Hooper • Chicago, IL • Age 17

Jennie Spinney • Kingston, Nova Scotia, Canada • Age 17

Eddie Tewasart • Berkeley, CA • Age 22

Krystal Palonado • Wauchula, FL • Age 11

FOR NEXT TIME...

Thanks to everyone who sent in artwork to the ANIMERICA Fan Art Gallery! For next time, how about sending in illustrations with "A Halloween Ball" as your theme?

As always, Art Director Yoshi and graphic designer Andrea ask that you don't use binder paper or pencil (color pencils are okay, but they don't reproduce nearly as well as pens and heavier paper stock do), and that you make your artwork ***NO LARGER THAN*** 8 1/2" x 11". Be sure to ***CLEARLY LABEL*** the back of your artwork with your ***NAME***, ***ADDRESS***, and ***AGE***. Color illustrations are prefered to black and white, and while we're at it, ***WRITE YOUR THEME*** on the back of your artwork! (If you don't, we have to guess.) Please note that we are unable to return submissions unless special provisions are made well in advance. If your illustration wasn't run this month, don't worry! We save every illustration you send us, and if you didn't see it printed this time, it may be printed in a future issue! Keep on drawin', all you artists out there, and be here for the fun next time on the ANIMERICA Fan Art Gallery!

roughly 2 and a half steps beyond...

alt.ant

website—http://www.book.uci.edu/anime.html

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Ranma ½

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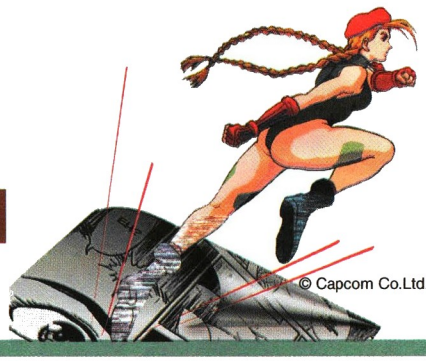

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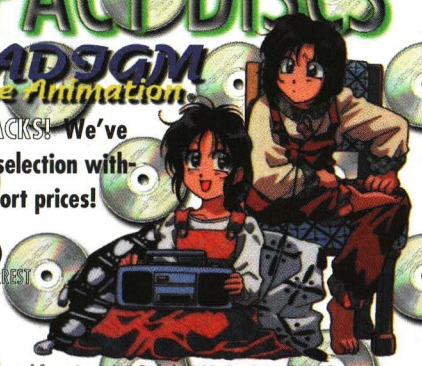

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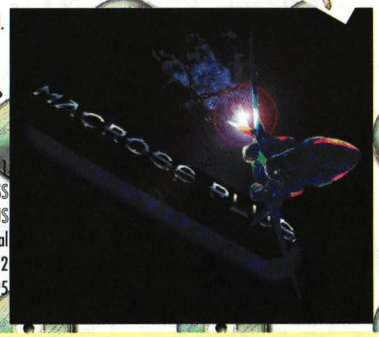

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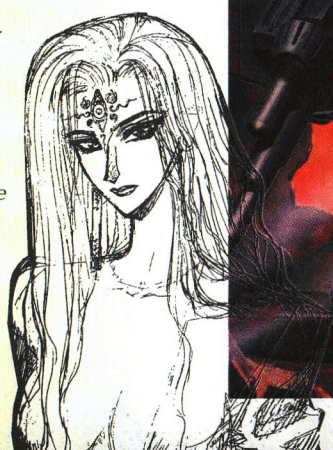

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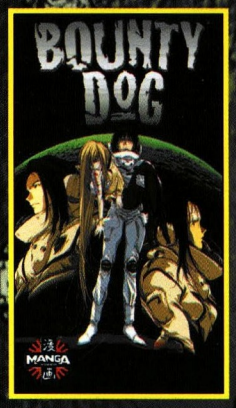

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